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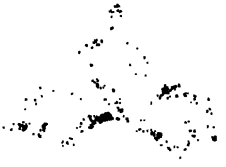

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TWO OF THE GUESTS

TWO OF THE GUESTS

By

Kate Gertrude Prindiville

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To

The Sweetest Lady in mine eyes
and the Man who calls her Wife

Two of the Guests

From Miss MARGARET EXETER
To Miss ANNE SUMNER

Ryemouth,
Thursday afternoon.

WELL, here I am, Anne, true to my promise to make you one of the house-party in spite of the encroachments of that inconsiderate old attack of tonsilitis. It's a regular shame you can't be here in person, sharing this pretty room and the picture of sky and lake and sunny garden framed in the window, and the fun and prospective merry-making of a most attractive assortment of men and girls, sagely sprinkled with an elderly couple, a whole kennel full of dogs and horses (horses don't

live in kennels exactly, do they? well, pretend I put them in stables), and last, charming Mrs. Walton and her even mite more charming husband.

It seems a little bit — no, a good *big* bit — unkind to be talking in this enthusiastic vein of pleasures which were to have been yours as well as mine if fate had not touched your troublesome larynx with her gruesome fingers just at the wrong time. But you know you would have your will about the letters, and "tell it all, all, *all*," is my excuse.

Well, as yet, Anne, there isn't very much "all" to tell. We've arrived, we've been presented — some of us, that is — and under the guise of affability have tried to take the measure of each other's good points covertly over the edge of a teacup, while drinking its contents and the soft summer air on a veranda that was all shade and cushions and swinging couches and seductive bamboo chairs, and

that overlooked a landscape that made you think of the Princess who leaned on her lover's arm and around her waist she felt it fold,—for it was all dying day and undulating hills and the magic and mystery which lie beyond their utmost purple rim.

I know you are wishing I would skip the setting and get down to the action and players of my dramatic story, but that I'll give you that view again, you may make a note on't. I've just been to the window to take another look at the gorgeous exit of His Majesty the Sun! My room lies over the veranda and I gain the benefit of the same point of western scene. But I won't tease you any more, Anne, with what I know you consider only irritating diversion. I'll get down to facts and individuals and the lived-happily-ever-afterwards style of narrative immediately.

Well, once upon a time—no, I won't

either. I'll really be good now, for I have barely time to set it all down properly before the summons to dinner. We dine at eight, I'd have you know, and we are to drive across the country somewhere later to a dance, and I've donned my embroidered batiste and my very best company smile and manners, and I'm altogether a very charming and superior and most fascinating personage, writing to you here by the window. But if I mention the window — There! I've shut it down with a metaphorical slam, and you won't have to read about the landscape again except between the lines where I've sketched whole rows of little imaginary thumb-nails.

Allons! After saying good-by reluctantly to you I stepped on the train, and after a four-hour hot interval stepped off at the pretty suburban platform of Ryemouth, where I discovered nice Mr. Walton, a rakish cart and a prancing steed awaiting what he

smilingly dubbed, my tardy arrival. The others had come on the train previous, and I found them all on the veranda drinking tea, after a drive of three or four twisting miles at a most exhilarating pace and with such a fascinating whip that I was altogether sorry to catch the gleam of the white mansion through the interstices of the trees.

The house is simply mammoth — low and long and colonial. I wish you could see the size of this room and its luxurious appurtenances and bath! — and Mrs. Walton looked like a pigmy standing under the huge portico to greet us. Both she and Mr. Walton inquired most commiseratingly for you, and said you owed them reparation just as speedily as your throat and the doctor would allow. Then they led me through the broad halls to the veranda, and there I found the view and the house-party.

Here are our *dramatis personæ* (unlike Shakespeare, I give *place aux dames*):

First, the pretty, winsome, white-robed lady of the manor and her handsome lord, whom I place together for they are never very far apart, and whom I needn't describe, for you know their manifold charms as well as I, only, perhaps, you might multiply January's attractions by two.

Second, a pretty débutante, Elinor Martin by name — a wee bit shy and a wee bit uncertain still whether to take masculine badinage as the laugh with or at — dainty and graceful and well-mannered, with a tall, lissome figure and a quantity of curling gold hair. (I've quite lost my heart to her already, and I've decided that the Yale man who made her blush so becomingly this afternoon must lose his, too.)

Then Nancy Shippen, another débutante — not quite so pretty, with a little more

savoir faire and decidedly more *sang froid.* There is nothing of the down-in-a-green-and-shady-nook about her, at all. She is quite openly and avowedly a disciple of Henry George — not offensively so, however, but just as if she clearly recognized the perquisites due her maidenhood, and exacted to the last tissue her pound of flesh. She is little and dark and piquante, and wears her clothes well, and I have no doubt is a very nice girl, but she can't have my heart or my trunk or my Yale man.

Then there is the dearest, jolliest, half-young, half-old, married woman — Mrs. Oliver Masters — with a regular Sir Lucius O'Trigger of a husband. She is comfortably fat and comfortably talkative and merry, and she "my-dear-ed" all of us girls on the instant — she hasn't any children of her own — and pretended to lose her head over each of the men in turn, to the scolding de-

light of her witty spouse, who is quite as fat and quite as happy and quite as suggestive of an intimate acquaintance with the good things and the good thoughts and the good deeds of life. Their laughter is so kindly and their jests so free from satire. They thrust with the button on, and then, mainly, at each other. I'd say I'd quite given my heart to Sir Lucius and Mrs. O'Trigger too, if I were not afraid you would begin to think me Janus-faced, to match the multiplicity of my cardiac mishaps.

Then, there is another girl — with myself and Mrs. Walton making six in all, you see — and I have kept her for the last, not because I think her the *best* of all the game, but because I was afraid I wouldn't be able to see her — or, rather, to make *you* see her — just and *justly*, as she is. I fear I have taken one of my at-sight prejudices, and you know of old what happens when the leaves

curl up. Not that she isn't most attractive and entertaining, only she isn't for me. (I'm not for her, either, so the scales of opinion balance.) She is older than the rest of us, I fancy — she appears about twenty-seven or twenty-eight — and has a very tall, stunning figure, well set off this afternoon by a wonderful silk traveling gown. She has rather nondescript brown hair, but it is beautifully arranged and cared for, fine brown eyes and a decided chin. Indeed, there is nothing indecisive about her — her voice, her movements, her poise, her manner, all seem part of a carefully regulated scheme of behavior, carefully conceived and carefully executed.

She also is a disciple of Henry George, but in a much more subtle, effective fashion than the innocent diableries of Miss Shippen, whose world is so openly peopled solely with males. Miss Hereford carries the motto of

the society engraved around her heart. You would never hear, "I am for men," issuing from her lips. That is part of her success. She is secretly, subtly, craftily, all for men; and to give her method its due meed of credit, the men seemed much all for her — everyone mostly, but the Yale chap who vacillated between the débutantes, and a rather quiet man next her, whom I did not meet, who laughed at Sir Lucius' sallies and smiled at Mrs. Walton, but didn't talk much, except what his eyes said to everyone, about my view. Don't think from what I've written, Anne, that Miss Hereford isn't attractive. You would only be obliged to reverse your judgment. She is immensely, strikingly, *overwhelmingly* so!

Now, for the men of my week's-end fairy play.

First, there's my lord of the manor, whom I've lost another heart to — no, he captured

the first bloom of my young affection — the others were second and third.

Then there's Sir Lucius, and then there's my Yale man or, rather, Miss Martin's Yale man, Carlton Phelps of New York. I adopted him on the spot, he was so big and bonny and brawny and brown — I'm fast in the fetters of apt alliteration's artful thrall, you see — here's another one, too — *brushed!* His face is so smily and sunny, as if he were shiny inside and out. His hair is parted with such geometrical precision, and his clothes are stunty with extra pockets and buttons and flaps and presses, and he wears conspicuously inconspicuous ties, and his manners have the little exaggerated splendor of the last year at college. But he's a *dear*, Anne, just a dear. I know he must have played foot-ball for his shoulders would discount Atlas's, and he is so long and lithe and agile. He's *clean* too, I know — within and without.

Then there's Egerton Andrews, another college man, but Harvard this time — equally well pressed as to clothes and hair, equally long and lithe and strenuous as to figure. He's livelier than Mr. Phelps and perhaps more talkatively clever, but he isn't nearly as attractive outwardly — to *me*, at least. Miss Hereford seemed to think him more so.

I was with Dr. Mansfield more particularly than anyone else this afternoon. He is a young specialist — oculist, I believe — very nice and well-bred and enthusiastic, somewhere, I should imagine, in the early thirties. He reminds me a wee bit of Frank Allen — thin, that way, with prominent facial bones and large feet and hands — capable, effective hands, they look, too. He isn't quite as fair, however, his hair being rather brown than yellow. He has fine teeth and a somewhat alluring chuckling

laugh, and he listens to your efforts to be blithesome with a little flattering air of attention which would be rather apt to fly to your head, if you hadn't the memories of three seasons to stand upon. I liked him unreservedly. He's thoroughly *nice.*

Finally, there's the man I didn't meet, because, when I joined the veranda group, he was mixed up in the corner with the tea silver, and when everybody settled down again — you know how those things happen — Mr. Walton walked over to ask him about some horse, and then Dr. Mansfield came over to me, and later Mrs. Walton evidently forgot that he had not been presented. So I can't even tell you his name — his last name, that is. Mrs. Walton called him "Arnold," which I presume is his Christian (shades of Matthew!) patronymic.

He looks like Sir Galahad modernized — not Watts's, but the one you dream of some-

times, with the pure heart and the strength of ten — rides like him too, I fancy, from Mr. Walton's technical allusions to girths and saddles. There was the same dreamy suggestion of ideality in his eyes when they followed the path of the princess beyond the rim of the purple hills, but when they turn upon *you*, as I found them, once or twice, on me, in the pauses of my discursive platitudes with Dr. Mansfield, they are full of quizzical analysis — not quite approving, not quite condemning, merely weighing. Perhaps, after all, he is a relation of Matthew. Can you fancy that disdainful Britisher acknowledging the claims of an American posterity? He would instantly issue a post-mortem edition of Friendship's Garland.

This Arnold certainly doesn't look the relationship, anyway. He is fair and tall and sinewy and thin, noticeably neat and up to the minute in his attire, with a marked

air of breeding and distinction. His face doesn't look very practical, but his body does — as if his feet walked daily among the tumults of life, while his head soared upwards, above the clouds. I suppose I'll meet him to-night at dinner. Perhaps not, though. You know how those things go, if they are once delayed. What is that saying about opportunity knocking only *once* at your door? Of course, I hope you understand, I mean *his* opportunity. It's how happy I would be with any, with me. Unfortunately, I fear it's the same with Sir Galahad.

There, Anne, now I've told you everything and it's quite the longest everything in the shape of a letter I have ever written anyone. Luckily I dressed before I started, for it's about two minutes to eight now, and my view is quite dusky, and I'm blinding my eyes here at the window, pretending

there's light. Reward me by being better — no, *well* — when I run in to see you on Monday. No, don't be frightened, Anne. I still remember I'm to tell it all — all — *all*. I'll write again in the morning.

Good-night, dear,

MARGARET.

From CARLTON PHELPS, *Esquire*
To JOHN VANCE, *Esquire*

Ryemouth,
Thursday afternoon.

DEAR JACK:

THERE'S the bonniest bunch of peaches in this house-party you ever struck — a whole basket of the downy, under-the-blushy-pink-mosquito-thus-far-shalt-thou-go kind — the sort that wins the blue ribbon at the county fair, and that you want to take home in your pocket, to keep any other old man from plucking out of your hand. It's simply the prize orchard. First, there's Miss Elinor Martin, who rather takes it out of a chap if he isn't all there when the bell tolls.

She has a regular peach-blow skin, blue eyes that laugh at you and then get shy, and more gold hair than she knows what to do with. Speaking of hair — but I guess I'll lead up to it *slow*!

Then there's a black-tressed clingstone, little and snappy and dressy — not quite so much to *my* taste, however, but what would pucker my mouth might suit *yours!* Her name is Miss Nancy Shippen, and she looks and acts the part.

Next — a regular, get-up-to-it-gradually, ten-dollar-a-minute variety — Miss Hereford, by *choice* — the colored supplement to the fashion magazine. She's fearfully and wonderfully made. So are her gowns. So is the hot-box she's effected in the hitherto safety-valve heart of our erstwhile enemy, Andrews of Harvard. Things look Mt. Pélee piled on Vesuvius for him at present writing, for what she think she owns she

cinches, or your frat. broth. has busted his binocular!

You know for yourself what a peach Mrs. Walton is. Well, there's another here like her, Mrs. Masters. She's not such a beauty, or so vernal or shapely curved, but she's ripe and ready and laughing and mellow, and *always* in at the feast. The kind you don't mind letting pump you dry of your troubles. Allow me to present you. You certainly need her.

There's a whole menagerie of men, with Mr. Walton as ring-master to whip us into doing the whirligig act — Andrews and a chap named Mansfield, a doctor, and the husband of Mrs. Masters who is quite the right sort, too.

And then there's that chap Griggs told us about last term — Arnold Gresham, you know, who rode that brute of a horse his father bought, straight down the sides of

that awfully perpendicular ravine — the beast tried to throw him at the edge — and then, after trotting him around the bottom half a dozen times, coolly spurred him up again. Don't you remember, it cured the horse, but it nearly gave Griggs's father apoplexy. He looks as if he could do it over again, all right — cool as an Indian, with muscles as reliable as steel cords.

Now, for my downiest prize-winner — the queen rose in the rosebud garden. She's a regular over-the-bunker-and-on-to-the-green-in-one-stroke sensation — the sort you'd like to steal quietly into the Prom. with, and then watch the fire-works explode! I've decided to take her to the game, in November. I haven't asked her yet, but it's going to be the business of my life while here, and you needn't get your tickets next mine either. We'll be fortified in a circle of empty seats. Her name is Miss Margaret Exeter, and she

is tall and slim and stunning and stunty, and *different*, with the daintiest flower-blossom head, and the most absolutely coruscating copper hair! It's the kind the sparks fly from, and I'm afraid they've already burned a hole in my coat.

Wouldn't you like a chance to be scorched yourself? You can't, though, Heaven be merciful! I'm in for the lark of my life, undisturbed. Here's flags at half-mast.

CARLTON.

From Miss ELINOR MARTIN
To Mrs. MARTIN

Ryemouth,
Thursday afternoon.

YOU worry of a Mother dear, I want you to know that your débutante daughter arrived quite safe, and promptly on the minute, and was properly welcomed on the station platform by Mr. and Mrs. Walton and a coach and four — incidentally, they welcomed also, four *superfine* men, Nancy, and Mrs. Oliver Masters, the wife of one of the superfine aforesaid. All the others are, happily, unmarried. That sounds as if the Benedicts of my acquaintance were all unhappily married!

Mrs. Walton seemed *so* glad to see Nancy and me, and introduced us to Mr. and Mrs. Masters who are both perfectly lovely — Mr. Masters is *always* teasing me — and then presented the three eligible men, Mr. Carlton Phelps of New York and Yale, Mr. Egerton Andrews of Boston and Harvard, and Dr. Mansfield of I don't know where, but he is awfully nice and talkative, and you don't have to cudgel your brains and wrinkle your forehead, wondering what you are going to say next! That is a great comfort, I assure you, Mother dear, for in spite of your warning to take things quietly and let the man do the entertaining, it isn't as easy as you imagine, driving three or four miles at the side of a dummy, and the men one meets *to-day* in society *won't* do the entertaining unless you know how to throw them little sugar-coated compliments for bait!

Dr. Mansfield, fortunately for your small,

timid daughter, Mother dear, was anything but that kind. He sat beside me on top of the coach, and Nancy and Mr. Phelps shared the same elevated seat. Mr. Andrews was below us with Mrs. Walton and a high and mighty, frigid antediluvian called Miss Hereford, who managed to convey to Nancy and me, in her scant bow of recognition, that as far as *her* vision was concerned we simply failed to exist. Mr. Masters sat with Mrs. Walton, and Mrs. Masters had the box seat with Mr. Walton, and we bowled along in great style through the village, until just outside we met the most stunning man walking towards us, and he coolly hailed the out-rider and started to climb up in front, but Miss Hereford made Mr. Andrews move over and of course he was forced to crowd into the seat next her. He evidently knew her before, but the pleasure seemed principally *hers!* His name is Mr. Arnold

Gresham, and Mr. Phelps told us he rode better than any man in Kentucky. He is staying with the Waltons for two weeks.

Mother dear, I wish you could just see this country, and the house is the most beautiful place you can imagine. We went out on the veranda — and such a veranda! — after we arrived, and we sat there for an hour talking and getting acquainted and waiting for Mr. Walton, who drove off again after a while, in the polo cart, to meet a Miss Exeter who came in on a later train from Cleveland.

And pretty soon up they drove, and I'll never call her *a* Miss Exeter again. She is *the*, decidedly and forever. There never could be anyone else when she's around. She's the most beautiful girl I ever saw in my life, and the smartest, and the most fascinating. She has the most wonderful, bewildering wealth of red hair, — not the

color you think of by that name, but something that is red and yet isn't too, — and she has the dearest smile and the whitest teeth, and the most adorable hands and feet.

The men are all infatuated with her already, and I don't wonder, for I am myself; but she isn't a bit the covetous kind, like Miss Hereford I fancy, for instance, and I know she will willingly let us share the results of her popularity. I don't care much anyway. I'd be perfectly contented to sit and look at her. Yes, Mother dear, your débutante daughter is in sad danger of parting company with her heart, the very first afternoon of her eagerly anticipated house-party.

Now, please be good to yourself and take a nice little rest without me, and don't worry yourself into thinking I'm ill, and I promise you I won't get drowned or thrown from my horse or carried off by bandits. And you

mustn't expect me to write again, for remember, I'll be having too happy and rushing a time to be able to get it in. If I'm ill, I'll telegraph, I promise you, Mother! So don't fuss and fret, and *please* give your sanguinary imagination a breathing spell!

Now, Mother dear and Father dear, your débutante daughter sends you a hug.

ELINOR.

From Miss NANCY SHIPPEN
To Mrs. SHIPPEN

Ryemouth,
Thursday afternoon.

DEAR MOTHER:

THE men of this house-party are the nicest crowd I've ever met *anywhere*, and already I've managed to know some of them quite well, and bid fair to be quite a belle. So does Elinor, only, of course, she rather ruins her chances by her timidity. It's a pity she's so shy, isn't it, for she's really very pretty at times.

There's another girl here, with red hair, who is also rather pretty — sort of a different style and one that seems rather attractive to

men. She isn't a débutante, though, and seems to like talking to women just as well as men. I suppose one does get *blasé* and lose interest after a season or two.

Perhaps you regain it again after a lot of seasons, though. At least, a Miss Hereford who is here seems to have done so. She looks like a regular old cat, and I'll wager she is forty if she's a day! It's an imposition on society to have her around loose. She can throw the lariat pretty well, too. At least she's managed to corral Egerton Andrews, and half subjugate Arnold Gresham as well. *He's* the kind you read about in books! I chose him myself the instant I saw him, and I guess he won't mind changing November for June!

There is another married couple besides Mr. and Mrs. Walton — the Oliver Masters — and then two other men, Dr. Mansfield, who seems rather oppressively clever, and

Carlton Phelps, all kinds of a star, with no objection to pouring his effulgence over *me!*

We are going to a ball to-night and Saturday night, and are to give one ourselves Friday night, and they say there are men to burn in all the house-parties around. Can't you picture your daughter's enjoyment?

Good-by. Now I must run and dress for dinner. We have it at eight, in the most formal style.

Lovingly,
NANCY.

I forgot to tell you about the country and the house, but the descriptions will keep till I see you Tuesday. I wish I could say a *week* from Tuesday!

From EGERTON ANDREWS, *Esquire*
To BROWNVILLE HUBBARD, *Esquire*

Ryemouth,
Thursday afternoon.

DEAR BROWN:

THERE'S a regular ripper of a girl here with the Waltons — Josephine Hereford of Washington — and she knows Pudgy Dalton's elder brother and has heard Larry Sexton's bachelor uncle speak of him, and she mentioned no end of Boston people she'd met around at places, in the summer. I'm going to ask her to run down in November and we'll show her the stunts together. She's just the proposition you'd revel in, — handsome head, a wonder in the figure and clothes

line, and enough dash and daring to make the captain of the team lose his job. O she'll *do* all right for the game! Sorry you are not with me, though, if you were, I'd have to divide the spoils.

The others here don't count much, except a carrot-haired goddess who is all serene as to gowns and manners, though she looks fiery as to temper as most red-headed girls do, and I'm afraid she'd prove a risky stock to dabble in. She's a beauty, though, all right, all right, but I like them *dark* myself.

Here's a Johnny Harvard to you!

EGERTON.

I forgot to say that Phelps of Yale is here. Met him on the train coming down. Its blamed awkward about the race. But of course he didn't mention it. We *must* wake up and *give* it to them next year!

From Miss JOSEPHINE HEREFORD
To Miss ETHEL MONROE

Ryemouth,
Thursday afternoon.

ETHEL, dear, *who* do you suppose is here at the Waltons with me. No less a person than *Arnold Gresham!!! Think* of that!

I never was so surprised in my life as when we met him on a country road this afternoon, as we were coaching home from the station. I didn't *dream* he was within *miles*, and he evidently was just as surprised to see *me*. He has been staying with the Waltons for a week, and they couldn't have mentioned about my coming. Wasn't it

strange! But then, true, they didn't know we had met before!

Of course he was tremendously *pleased*, and climbed up beside me quite as naturally as of yore, though I was obliged to turn away from *such* a charming Boston man, who was visibly chagrined. But of course I will make it up to him later, and he will be a very good foil for Arnold. Not that the latter seems to need any such "Discourager of Hesitancy," however. He appears *more* than willing to return to his old allegiance, only he needs *rousing*, as he seems to be quieter than he was that summer in the mountains. I have *full confidence* in my ability to effect the transformation, however!

There isn't much of anything else here in the masculine line worth mentioning, besides the Boston man, and I am glad to learn that the country houses around us are full. There is a small boy from Yale, and you

know I can't *abide* small boys! — a doctor somebody, who looks too professional to be interesting, and one of those promiscuously attentive married men. That's all!

The women aren't any more interesting as possibilities. There are two chits of débutantes, — one the kind that talks you into boredom and the other the kind that blushes if you look, — the wife of the promiscuous entertainer, equally promiscuous herself, and a red-headed girl who isn't altogether bad-looking if you happen to admire the type, which I *don't*. Can't you see how Arnold and I will have to be all in all to each other, Ethel dear?

I must stop now and dress for dinner. I am *so* glad I packed my smartest things!

JOSEPHINE.

From WILLIAM MANSFIELD, M.D.
To Mrs. MANSFIELD

Ryemouth,
Thursday afternoon.

DEAR MOTHER:

I ARRIVED here all right, and expect to enjoy my short vacation tip-top. The house is a picturesque old mansion of the colonial type of architecture, and the grounds and country around are something fine. The stables are filled with horses and we expect to drive and hunt a good deal, so it will be a great rest from the hospital wards, and the heat and dust of town.

There are twelve in our party — Mr. and Mrs. Walton, Mr. and Mrs. Masters, Miss

Hereford of Washington, Miss Martin and Miss Shippen of Baltimore, and Miss Margaret Exeter of Cleveland. The men, besides myself and the married gentlemen, are Carlton Phelps of New York, Egerton Andrews of Boston, and Arnold Gresham. I don't know where he hails from, but he rides very well, Mr. Walton told me, and he seems a great friend of his and his wife's.

We have only just arrived, that is, about a couple of hours ago, so I can't tell you much how the guests strike me, beyond their appearance. I talked mostly to Miss Exeter, the most beautiful girl here, and I should imagine she might be that also wherever she happened to be. She is tall and slight, and has very attractive eyes, and a remarkably expressive face. Her hair is her chief charm, however. It is a very unusual shade of auburn and is extremely heavy and noticeable. She appears to have a lot of sense, too,

and is very quick and responsive in conversation. I liked her very much.

I am glad you are enjoying the sea, as you say. The change of air is just what you needed. I will write again when I get back to town. If things work together all right I hope to be able to spend a week with you, somewhere about the end of August or the first of September. In the meantime, please take good care of yourself. My love to Mary.

Your son,

WILLIAM.

From Mrs. MASTERS
To Mrs. KENT

Ryemouth,
Thursday afternoon.

MY DEAR ALICE:

I HAVE just come up to my room from afternoon tea on the veranda, and I am going to steal a moment, before Oliver rushes in with a thousand questions to be answered on the instant, to give you a little, hurried, kinetoscope outline of our new and beautiful surroundings.

The house is charming old colonial, just the kind of a summer home you would imagine the Waltons would own, and the country about is refreshment, light, and

peace to eyes dust-tired from town scenes. Everything about the place — house, gardens, stables, equipages, service — is perfect, a fitting background for the dearest host and hostess in the world. Mrs. Walton is even prettier and younger than last summer, and he is, as I tell Mr. Masters, the only approximate successor for His Highness I ever came anywhere near.

We are a very nice party of ourselves to add to the charm of the house. There are two pretty débutantes, a very smart young woman aged twenty-eight I should surmise, — handsome, rather, and clever, I should think, in a still and stealthy way, — not *at all* my style, — and a girl who stole my heart out of me even before she opened her lips, and every man on the veranda seemed in imminent danger of following suit. Not that she seemed at all anxious to have them. That is another of her charms.

Really, Alice, I wish you could see her and I intend that you shall, too, later in the summer, for I am going to carry her off to the Adirondacks with me for September, if she will come. She would make a veritable sensation. Her name is Margaret Exeter, and she has a tall and willowy body that reminds you, in its graceful movements, of the stem of a flower. Her head is exactly like a flower, cunning, saucy, sweet, and beautiful, and her hair is like some gorgeous Oriental head-dress, the most wonderful shade of red I ever saw. Oh, I am quite maudlin about her already, Alice, as you see, as maudlin as any of the nice boys and men here.

By the way, if I do not get to the men in my kinetoscope pictures at once, I will not be able to reach them at all, as time flies, my dear, and I hear the voice of my spouse which always precedes his appear-

ance, like the voice of the swallow, loud in the land.

Arnold Gresham is the one I like the best of all. He is so courteous and thoughtful and reposeful and good to look at, and he does not tell all he knows at the first meeting. He rides like a centaur too, they say, but you would never hear it from him. I have picked him out for my beauty, though there seemed to be something out of gear in the machinery this afternoon. Perhaps because Miss Hereford — the smart young woman — had evidently marked him with a piece of red chalk for her own special possession, and Miss Exeter seemed happy with the people close at hand. It must not happen again, however. I have written it down in my match-making archives. So be it!

Besides Mr. Gresham, there is a rather interesting young oculist here — a Dr. Mansfield — who is a special protégé of Mr.

Walton and very clever in his profession, he tells me. He seems nice and enthusiastic, and knew enough to monopolize Miss Exeter and to entertain her, too, though I fancy that is not difficult, she seems so happy and expectant of pleasure.

Carlton Phelps talked to her too, as often as the débutantes would let him, and seemed to find the habit easy. He and his friend Mr. Andrews are both college seniors (to be!) and are rigged out in all the bravery of Alma Mater haberdashers. I haven't any red ink around to describe their attire, but they themselves are both thoroughly nice, good, fun-loving youngsters.

Here comes Oliver. I have reached the end of my pictures, fortunately.

Lovingly yours,

ADELAIDE.

From ARNOLD GRESHAM, *Esquire*
To ROBERT COLTER, *Esquire*

Ryemouth,
Thursday afternoon.

WELL, old chap, the house-party has assembled and is now up-stairs here, washing its hands and dusting its purple and fine linen, preparatory for dinner.

Here is the roster: —

Mr. and Mrs. Walton, whom you know as I know, and love as I love — hence description unnecessary.

Mr. and Mrs. Masters — she fair, fat, and forty — he fair, fat, and forty-five. Both vivacious, both witty, both good-humored — each privately thinking the other perfect —

both ready either to initiate fun or follow your lead, with equal zest. Both jolly good fellows and the best of sports for an uncertain company, or, rather, a company of uncertain elements.

Miss Josephine Hereford (!) whom, if you do not know *quite* as I know, you are sufficiently well acquainted with to compute the space her figure, her gowns, her schemes, her self-importance, her danglers — human and mineral — require, and realize how she chokes the atmosphere and obscures the sun and blurs the splendor of the moon, and is quite the dickens to pay generally, in the landscape. If I had known *she* was coming I wouldn't have said "Yes." It's mean to put it that strong, isn't it, old chap, but you know how *adhesive* she can be if she tries, and how she buzzes and purrs when you want to be quiet. She's tremendously good looking though, still, all right, and Solomon

in all his glory never equaled her raiment!

Miss Elinor Martin, débutante. Pretty, tall, shy, and golden-haired. In the rather afraid-you-are-guying-her stage at present — great promise of future development.

Miss Nancy Shippen, class débutante; style, little, dark, saucy; manner, a bit too eager. Her world all bounded by men, with a lot of lay figures in petticoats, who don't count. Nice girl, though, with more sense by and by.

William Mansfield, M.D., oculist, with a *penchant* for calling a shovel a spade and pronouncing it always with the capital italicized. He's a thoroughly good sort, though, Bob, ambitious and self-helping and with lots of enthusiasm and intelligence. He has eyes that see a church by daylight without the aid of a spy-glass, and wit enough to make the whitest teeth and the

sauciest dimple and the reddest lips and the most perverse little chin and the brownest eyes twinkle and flash and sparkle with fun, and merry appreciation of his nonsense. Confound him, though, he's a monopolist!

Carlton Phelps, Yale '05, with foot-ball and New London stamped all over him. A young Greek god equipped in modern armor of the good old vintage that looks upon the paint when it is red.

Egerton Andrews, Fiercely, Fiercely Hawvard, also '05 — Yale's twin brother and Miss Hereford's own and only. *Need* I say more?

Then there's a girl here, Bob, from Cleveland — Margaret Exeter, her name is — isn't it pretty? and isn't there something in the sound that makes you want to say it over and over, just to try it to different notes of music? — Margaret Exeter, Margaret Exeter, Margaret Exeter. It looks like her there,

on the paper, tall and high-bred and distinctive and beautiful and clever and kind and *white-souled!* She came into the house-party and my life a little bit late, like the heroine that she is — for all must make way before her. The others are only background.

Here is her picture, Bob. She's just as high as my heart and a good deal higher. She is straight as an arrow and lean as a young sapling. She has small feet and beautiful hands, and her gloves and shoes, and linen coat and skirt, and cocky black sailor are altogether different from other girls' wearings, with a grace and a style and an air of their own, because, forsooth, they are *her* own!

Then her head is little and tossed aloft in the air on the tip of a long, slender throat. She has a broad, low forehead and wine-brown eyes, a little straight nose, lips that are ruddier than the cherry, a mouth that

was moulded by Cupid, and a chin that flouts you and defies you and challenges you, just *contrary*, like the saucy thing it is.

And then her hair! Ah, if I could only paint her hair, Bob! But it's all gold and copper and bronze and amber, and topaz and autumn leaves and sweet yellow daffodils — with the sheen of silk, the glitter of brilliants, the texture of spun wire, the curl of waving feathers! I've never seen hair anything like it before. It isn't red and it isn't gold and it isn't brown and it isn't copper, but it's all of them together — and it grows low on her neck, and little curly ends whisper secrets in her tiny ears, and it lies over her forehead like an aureole of diluted sun-beams. She isn't a saint, though, as *you* conceive the term, you sinner, but she's *good* right down to the core.

You must think I'm a bit unbalanced, old chap, but the fact is, I never met a girl quite

like Miss Exeter before — or, rather, I never *saw* one; for the truth of the matter is, I didn't meet her at all. She drove out late with Mr. Walton and, as ill-luck would have it, I was busy in the corner of the veranda trying to fix a refractory samovar when the presentations were made, and nobody noticed I wasn't included, and I was so interested just watching her that I forgot it, too. But I looked and I listened and I saw and I heard. Her voice is low and laughing and musical and drawling — a provocative voice which challenges, like the chin. And she says the wittiest things in the stillest way, but there's a look *underneath* —!

It's funny, isn't it, my going on this style, but I feel as if I knew her awfully well already — just as if I had been with her always, or at least for a long time, and that I knew just how she felt about things and what she thought of all these people, and as if

she'd *feel* I knew, too, if she would only once look my way. She didn't, though, this afternoon. Confound Mansfield — he's altogether too grasping and entertaining. I'll see if I can't mend matters at dinnner.

I guess I'll have to turn you down now, old man. It's time to dress.

ARNOLD.

From Miss MARGARET EXETER
To Miss ANNE SUMNER

Ryemouth,
Friday morning.

HERE'S the top of the morning to you, my tonsilitis friend, and it's the very apex of tops, I assure you — 7 A.M., and brite and fair! I and the lark are at Heaven's gate singing duets together — a delicate compliment for you.

No, it isn't an uneasy conscience, and I didn't meet Sir Galahad, and there's nothing I particularly want to tell you, but much that I think you want to hear. I'm doing my best to provide you a tonic. It ought, at any rate, to make sleep easy.

Well, I came down the stairs last night after my voluminous letter to you, just as a whole sequence of clocks were proclaiming the hour of eight, and found everybody assembled in the hall, awaiting my descent. It looked like a scene in a Frohman play — the beautiful paneled hall and the rooms stretching off on either side — the sheen of the moon on the quivering vines in the doorway and windows, the picturesque groups of men and women. I just had an instant to notice that my Yale man had my Yale girl, and that pretty much everything else in the way of masculine eligibility had fallen complacent victim to Miss Hereford's successful charms, when Mr. O'Trigger's stentorian voice roared out that if I didn't reach the last step in time for the last stroke I'd be guilty of the worst sin a pretty girl (he *really* said it, Anne!) could commit — making a man late for his dinner.

Of course everyone started and looked up and I was horribly conspicuous, but I was bound I wouldn't *seem* embarrassed, anyway, so I just stopped and leaned over the balustrade and asked him, as saucily as I dared, if he wanted me to come down as my small brother did, when he wasn't in a hurry because he'd keep the others waiting, but because he was very much afraid he'd have to wait himself! Of course they all laughed, even Sir Galahad, which was most improper of him when he hadn't been presented, and then Dr. Mansfield met me as I reached the bottom, and said the honor was to be his, and then we all filed into the dining-room — another mammoth apartment all soft candle-light and flowers and moonshine and noiseless butlers, and shimmering silver and glittering glass and choice china! (I put in the last just to tease you. What do you suppose is the matter with my adjectives,

anyway. Enthusiasm is making me lisp in numbers. Look out for rhymes in my next!)

I noticed who took in whom, all for your benefit; and because I was trying to remember their faces by their places, — I told you I'd take to versification! — I lost the opening remark of Dr. Mansfield's dinner eloquence, and had to smile vaguely in reply, which, judging by the quizzical amusement of Sir Galahad opposite, glanced short of the bull's-eye.

The table was circular and this is the way we sat: Mrs. Walton at the head, and moving from her left, around, Mr. Masters, Miss Martin, Carlton Phelps, myself, Dr. Mansfield, Mrs. Masters, Mr. Walton, Miss Hereford, Sir Galahad (his name, by the way, is Arnold Gresham — I wish you could hear the lingering drawl Miss Hereford gives it!) Miss Shippen, Mr. Andrews, and, ring around the rosy, back we are again to Mrs. Walton.

Dr. Mansfield and I had a beautiful time at dinner. He is very clever in a solid sort of way, a little bit inclined to be downright, perhaps — his statements are all truths, and the primrose by the river's brim is scientifically, as well as visually, a primrose to him, and not at all inclined to arouse the thoughts which lie too deep for tears.

In fact, I very much doubt if he has any such thoughts. He's too busy and capable and energetic and enthusiastic, and while he may not be able to see through mists and follow the princess down the other side of the mountain, I am sure he is very alert to discover the specks in his own little patch of horizon, and to set about removing them the best way he can. He told me all about his work later, while we were resting on Mrs. Chatterton's veranda, after a dance. He is an oculist and simply crazy about his profession. He studied in New York and then

went to Berlin and Paris, and he told such interesting stories about his life over there, and his hospital experiences and contacts with the great continental specialists. He wasn't a bit morbid or gruesome, but sketched the brighter side of illness, with just a hint of the shade of darkened rooms and tight bandages to make the picture real.

I can see your dainty nostrils dilate in disgust at such a radical conversational duet for a ball in the moonlight, but I enjoyed it more than all the airy trifles I heard and laughed at and, I'm sorry to add, responded to, through the whole of the witching evening; for a very honest nature paid me the unsolicited compliment of remembering, with Mrs. Browning, that of one clay God made us all, by realizing that I was capable of appreciating the ambition and the work that stood for his ideal of self, stepping up, up, up, from a conquest of the real! *There,*

Miss Anne! I hope you feel properly subdued and pigmy-fied — *much* smaller than Alice when she finally managed to crawl through the hole.

Now, let me see! What else shall I tell you? I have all the time in the world at your disposal, for breakfast isn't until nine and you needn't have it then if you don't want to — and nobody else seems to be stirring — not even a mouse — not even the katy-did-did-dids and the crickets and the screech owls, and the hundred and one buzzing insects which made the sleeping portion of the night so hideous that it would have been a joyous relief if the goblins *had* git me! I never closed my eyes after I once lay down in my great soft bed. Talk about the noises of the town! It's Bye-low land and the city of Nod, and the very epitome of drowsy stillness, when placed in comparison with the noises of the country.

It's quiet enough this morning, however. I wish I could send you a glimpse of my hills tipped with their coronets of sunlight. I suppose it's the reflex of the Princess's wedding celebration — the special brand of red fire they use in the flowering valleys of the Land of Heart's Desire. There is such a soft little summer breeze deftly at work dusting off the tree-leaves, and the grass looks so swept and garnished, and it's June in my soul and June in the day!

Shall I go on? Shall I continue to interlard the paragraphs of my story with a few little other discursive essays, after the masterly, two-volume, padding manner of the romancer of Rome? There, Anne, I caught the book you threw at my head! It's a very inconsiderate method of getting a new binding for your Shakespeare. Besides, rage is bad for tonsilitis. Swallow hard — if you can! — and when very angry count a hun-

dred. Thank you, a smile *is* better. *Now*, I promise to be good.

Let me see! Where did I leave off? Well, when we got up from the table — you don't want to know what we had for dinner, do you? I hate to remember that sort of thing. I believe I have Edwin Booth's Byronic distaste to hearing a woman dilate on what she had to eat. As I was saying, when we arose from the table we started to go out to the veranda again, but Mrs. Walton frustrated the movement, and sent us up to get our coats, for it was after ten then, and country balls begin early, and we had a drive of four or five miles ahead of us.

When we came down — Miss Martin and I, for the other wise virgins had brought their lamps, in the shape of their wraps, providently with them in the first place — we discovered the house-party had moved to the veranda, with the exception, that is,

of nice Dr. Mansfield and that beautiful Phelps boy (he's a perfect *love*, Anne!) who told us we were to drive over with them. And so I found we were — with them and several others. For the horses were waiting, and we saw that Miss Hereford had the box seat of a stunning trap with Sir Galahad at her side — he's evidently crazy about her! — and that with them were Mrs. Walton and Mr. Andrews, *toujours*; and that Mr. Walton drove the cunningest open bus, with Mrs. Masters ready to clutch the ribbbons every few minutes when she thought he was coquetting too violently with disaster, and the rest of us all piled in facing each other, on the two parallel seats behind.

It was the greatest sort of sport, with Mr. O'Trigger's teasing and Mr. Phelps's bubblingly infectious laugh, and I didn't envy the other trap-load a bit, though Sir Galahad must have been a dream in the moonlight.

But if people

— be not fair to me,
What care I how fair they be?

Besides, he has very *impertinent* eyes — they search you so, as if the outer *you* didn't count, and they were looking through a magnifying glass at the sea-weed at the bottom! And *my* sea-weed isn't all coral and pearl, either.

As I am on the subject, Anne, I may as well finish him up and then put him away on a high shelf, with the bound editions of dead authors. Just as I said, I didn't meet him. Nobody dreams that I haven't, of course, as he doesn't seem to come in contact with anything that doesn't go out of its way to come in contact with him; and needless to tell you, I never go out of my own orbit, myself, and besides, I've been busy with others who didn't seem to think it a trouble to meet me

or express their assurance that my ways are ways of pleasantness, and, if not so certain of the *peace* of my paths, they appear quite willing to risk the brambles, nevertheless.

But if he doesn't want to know me, why does he stare at me so? I'm neither remarkably ugly nor remarkably beautiful. I dress pretty much as other girls dress. I talk and laugh in what I endeavor to make a rational manner, without the distinction of any incriminating accent. And yet, every time I turned my eyes across the table at dinner, to-night, I caught him regarding me openly with that serious stare of his, as if I had escaped from the Zoo and might be expected any instant to break out into monkey-shines. At first it made me uncomfortable — I was afraid something was wrong with my hair — then it made me indignant — then it left me indifferent. What's Hecuba to me! Let us drop the subject anyway.

It seems, somehow, sort of lowering to be talking in this fashion about somebody I don't know, and who has made it evident, besides, he doesn't want to be known. I'll tell you all about it if I ever do meet him — I promise faithfully, Anne — but there isn't the slightest danger, for I'm quite as determined as he that the chance encounter *shan't* come!

I had a beautiful time at the ball. The house looked so lovely as we drove up to it, with the swaying figures of the dancers moving past the windows, or resting on the verandas and steps, or strolling slowly through the moonlighted gardens — the scent of roses everywhere in the June air, and the music making it all *hurt* a little, it stormed your heart so passionately. Yes, I had a beautiful time at the ball. I danced with everybody in our own party (save one!) and with a whole crowd of other men besides,

some of whom we are to meet again at luncheon, to-day, over at the club. We are to ride up through the hills at eleven, and I'm simply crazy to get into the saddle once more. Perhaps I'll find the Princess, too, or perhaps, who knows, my Prince! You never can tell. It's always well to be prepared for catastrophes.

Elinor Martin looked ever so sweet last night, all in palest blue which suited her eyes and the gold crown of her hair. Nancy Shippen was attractive too, in filmy black tulle, and Mrs. Walton was lovely, as she always is, in white lace. Mrs. Masters was as buxom and funny in black net as she had been, earlier in the afternoon, in blue linen.

But I *wish* you could have seen Miss Hereford! Don't imagine her gown was a bit summery or simple or suggestive of June. It was fearfully and wonderfully concocted — as complex as its wearer, and

as *dazzlingly* attractive! It was all white satin and white tulle and silver sequins and drooping water-lilies, and she carried its magnificence superbly! I don't wonder she preferred walking to waltzing, and was the first choice of the drivers of traps!

I didn't see much of the Harvard man at the dance, — he was too occupied with Miss Hereford, — but I lost my heart all over again to good old Yale. He doesn't play foot-ball after all, as I thought, but is of course awfully interested in the game, and I've promised to go down to New Haven for the championship series in November. Miss Martin is going too — we three planned it together.

It is pretty close to breakfast-time now, Anne, and my memory has acquitted me of telling it all — all — all! I hope you can make this rambling scrawl coherently readable, but parentheses seem as necessary to my

narrative as to a novel of Henry James. My will and my heart are for you anyway.

Now I'll take a run down into the garden. How I wish you were here to go a-Juneing with me. Perhaps you'll be well enough when I get home. Oh, but it will be July on Monday, won't it! Let us upset the calendar and call it the thirty-first of June!

MARGARET.

From Miss MARGARET EXETER
To Miss ANNE SUMNER

Ryemouth,
Friday, before dinner.

THIS will have to be a hasty scramble of a letter, Anne, for I have just about ten minutes to devote to you and my day's doings. For we dine in state at eight — not merely our own goodlie companie, but a grand affair for forty, and then we dance in state or any other way you fancy afterwards, in our own living-rooms and ancestral halls and verandas. Doesn't it sound exciting? It makes me feel battle, murder, and sudden death to that old attack of tonsilitis of yours. And the worst of it is, it seems so sort of

mean to be expatiating in this manner on pleasures out of your reach, while at the same time I should feel *meaner* if I left it all *unsaid!* At least I have your mandate. That's some species of balm for my irritating conscience.

Let me see — where did I leave off? Oh, yes, it was just before breakfast and I was going out in the garden! Well, I went and I found Mr. Phelps on the veranda and he went too, and we wandered around to get some conception of our bearings in the sunlight. We saw Mr. Gresham and Dr. Mansfield sprinting in the distance, but we turned home another way and went in to breakfast before they arrived. Everybody straggled in as he liked. Miss Hereford, Mrs. Masters, and Mr. Walton didn't appear at all.

After breakfast we sewed and talked on the veranda a little while, and then went up-stairs to change our muslins for riding

clothes. I wore my new tan linen habit, and I'm so crazy about it myself that I'm afraid I exaggerated the effect on the others. I'll dress up for you when I get home and let you see. (Needless to say, Anne, this is a *joke. Don't* think I'm quite bereft of brains!)

Mrs. Walton was in tan, too — the others in heavy skirts and shirt-waists. *Miss Hereford doesn't ride!* Think of that, with that figure! So Mr. Walton drove her and Mrs. Masters and the Harvard man — he's her abject slave — and the rest of us galloped off, over the hills and far away. I had the time of my life. We met a whole crowd of men and girls who were at the dance last night, and everybody rode unusually well. Mrs. Walton has a stunning seat, and as for Sir Galahad — ! If I hadn't promised myself I wouldn't mention him again, I couldn't help telling you that to see him on a horse

brings knight errantry back into the twentieth century! But please pretend I didn't say it. No, I didn't meet him, and I *never* shall!

We had an awfully jolly time at luncheon. The club-house is extremely pretty and picturesque, and there were hosts of people, and we ate out on the lawn. We galloped home shortly afterwards, for we were all invited to a garden party at four, and Mrs. Walton was going to receive, and it behooved us to be on time.

Mr. Walton drove us over in a wonderful coach with trumpeters and clanking chains, which held the rest of the household up on top, and *me*, please, side by side with my gallant host on the box seat. Of course, it was practically my turn, but I felt very important and honored nevertheless, and did my best to look dressed up to the occasion and the trumpeters, in a frilly green batiste and a flippety-flop hat.

Everybody in the country world was there — all our lunch guests and all our dinner guests for to-night, and a crowd of others who told me they were going to drive over later from other dinners, for the ball. I've promised so many men I'd dance with them that I expect to be in as much of a whirl as a perpetual-motion top. Nothing conceited about that speech, is there?

Then, like the king of France, we marched back again — back to our ain fireside (without the fire) — to our ain veranda and comfortable rooms, with Mrs. Walton's laughing order ringing in our ears as we trooped up-stairs, — "Now, remember, girls, not a minute later than a quarter to eight!"

It's that now, you rascal. See how you make me disobey the mandates of my commander-in-chief! And I still have a whole row of butterflies to adjust in my hair.

Think, if they should alight on the wrong stray lock! Yes, I'm all a dazzling glitter of bronze and gold!

Good-night, dear. I'll get up early in the morning and tell you the rest.

MARGARET.

From Miss MARGARET EXETER
To Miss ANNE SUMNER

Ryemouth,
Early Saturday morning.

HE said: "I've wanted to know you from the very first moment you came out on the veranda! I've never wanted to know anyone so, in my whole life before!"

She said: "You have very original ways of keeping your wants to yourself!"

The consequences: He seems to consider that the long-felt want has given him prior right to claim all sorts of promises for future engagements. She seems to consider he may have to be suppressed!

But he knows her, Anne, he knows her!

Doesn't that sound like an exciting prologue? And aren't you on the very outermost expectant tip of your saucy French slippers to have me turn down the lights and begin to whisper: "Once upon a time, Best-Beloved —"?

But you can just put your saucy French heels right down on the floor again with a sharp little click, for I am not going to explain that dialogue till I come to its proper place in the history of my dinner and the ball afterwards. (Ah, that beautiful ball!) For I have my own small reasons for preserving my chronological record of happenings intact. It's a bad thing, Anne, to be wilfully guilty of anachronism. You are apt to get a pinch from the revengeful finger of time.

I never enjoyed such unadulterated pleasure in my twenty-two years' existence before. Perhaps it was the witching beauty

of the night, for the moon was full and with delight looked round her when the heavens were bare! Perhaps it was the silvery gardens, and the beautiful home, and the scent of the June roses, and the throb and echo of the stringed orchestra! Perhaps it was the crowd of happy-faced, well-dressed men and girls! Perhaps it was my own happy face, and my own happy heart, and my own pretty new gown of bronze and gold! It's a rather material theory, I know, — perhaps, though, Herr Teufelsdroch wouldn't agree with me, — but a perfectly new gown that one knows is lovely, and one knows is stunning, and one knows is *becoming*, is the very best before-party, have-a-good-time prescription I know!

Mine was quite all you could have wished. It was bronze tulle over tulle skirts of gold and orange — you haven't seen it for I kept it as a surprise! — and it was all flecked with

gold in a misty, moon-shine veiled in cloud effect, and there was a big bronze and gold butterfly just alighting on my left shoulder, and a whole circle of the same tawny, fluttering things, crowning my tawny head. It was really sort of a sensation gown, in a nice lady-like way. Mr. Walton said I looked like a will-o'-the-wisp, and Sir Galahad told me, later in the evening — *much* later in the evening — that he thought the simile very apt, as he found me just as elusive as a firefly. I'm getting anachronistic after all, am I not? Well, never mind. You'd have guessed anyway.

So you see, Anne, I was quite prepared to enjoy my evening when I turned away from a final disgracefully openly admiring glimpse of my Whistlerian figure, and walked down the stairs. Of course I was a little bit late, but that was *your* fault, my dear, *not* the butterflies, and I found that some of the

guests had already assembled and that I was the only one missing from the group back of Mrs. Walton. I was most remorseful and apologetic, but had not had time to look the one and voice the other, when Mr. Walton gave a dramatic start, and both he and Mr. Masters advanced to meet me with the most sweeping of royal obeisances, and brought me up in state to the receiving party, as if I were the queen of Sheba, or wonderful Alexandra herself.

Fortunately, Anne, most of the guests were those I had grown to know quite well, meeting them so often, and of course every body laughed and felt it necessary to apply some little flattering epithet to my gown, and Mrs. Masters insisted she was going to dye her hair and send her husband out with a butterfly-net in the morning. That blessed Phelps child said he liked it so much he'd forgive the suggestive orange effect, but I

must promise not to wear it at the Yale cotillion. Sir Galahad looked something, I don't know what. He declared it was approbation, but was probably too polite to supply the negative prefix.

And then Dr. Mansfield murmured his sweet nothing, and nice Elinor Martin and Nancy Shippen followed suit, and even Miss Hereford voiced a halting sentence of approval — seconded of course, by her echo, Mr. Andrews — which I'm afraid I was not over-gracious in receiving. I tried to appear pleased, Anne, but it was so perfunctorily done. I don't mind confessing, though, I appreciated her praise more than any of the others — she is *such* an artist, and her own robe of lavendar tulle was so exquisitely perfect.

Well, you can't help but admit that all that fulsome nonsense was a very good tonic for a happy time at dinner. It was served

at three tables — a large one seating twenty in the dining-room, presided over by Mrs. Walton and reserved for the elder and more important personages, and two smaller round ones, seating ten each, in the beautiful music-room, at which Miss Hereford and I were the hostesses. It was great fun. Hers was a pink table, and mine a yellow one, carefully chosen, I suppose, so as not to conflict with the refractory color on my head. She had Dr. Mansfield (I was mighty sorry she *had!*), Mr. Andrews and Miss Shippen, of our house-party, and I, Elinor Martin, beautiful Carlton Phelps, and Sir Galahad with me, the latter directly opposite, of course, but fortunately, not necessarily within the talking radius of a not overly punctilious (when she doesn't think it required) hostess. In between, at both tables, were the men and girls we had been seeing a good deal of, at different balls and luncheons and things.

I had Mr. Cliveden at my left — I didn't put him there; Mrs. Walton arranged the seating — an extremely nice man, rather elderly and quiet, interested in dogs and horses and rural pursuits generally, and an authority on landscape gardening. He has been clapped o' the shoulder with the glamour-wand of the country. Lives out here all year round now, though he still keeps a house somewhere in town.

Mr. Belden sat at my right. I told you about him, didn't I, in last night's letter or, rather, in the letter which described last night's festivity. I've written so many to your sore-throated majesty that my mind is all haphazard about their sequence. He's the man, you know, who danced so wonderfully, and came over to-day and rode with us just as wonderfully, and told me all those fascinating things about the walking trip he took last year through the Riviera. Haven't

I written you all that before? If I haven't I'll make joyful amends when I see you. Perhaps I'll tell it over again, anyway. He's very well worth a second edition.

Everybody had such a merry, happy, saucy, repartee-ing time, at dinner — at least I can so speak for *my* table. Each of my guests seemed unusually brilliant and clever, and looked his best and said his best, and looked and laughed his appreciation of his own and his neighbor's *bons mots* — everyone, that is, but Sir Galahad. He *looked* his best — if I could only make you realize, Anne, what a beautiful best it is — always a little bit better best than what any other man can show — with such a brave, steadfast, *noble* poise to his head — a typical Sir Galahad —

So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer,
A virgin heart in work and will.

Well, as I was saying, before I grew Tennysonianly discursive, he *looked* his best, as I had a very good chance of knowing whenever I cared to glance over the heads of the yellow marigolds into his eyes; but he *said* very little (I used to fancy his silence was mainly the repose of a naturally quiet nature, but I've changed my mind about that and several other vague impressions), and he laughed very little, for though his lips twitched frequently in whimsical enjoyment of the fun and piquancy around him, his eyes were serious, analyzing, *glowing* — large, soft, blue, *ruminating* eyes — with the unmistakable Arnold thirst for divination burning in their centers.

Well, of course I couldn't be responsible for his silence even if he was a guest at my table. I was sorry for the girl he took in, a Miss Rutledge, who is one of Mrs. Paysan's house-party — a very attractive girl from

Memphis. But conversation was mostly spontaneous and general, and she managed very well, for the man on her other hand was nice to her, too. Besides, I didn't know him and I didn't intend I ever should. Now wait, my dear! Just curb your impatience! I haven't arrived at that dialogue yet.

Dancing began almost immediately after dinner. A Hungarian orchestra had been playing on the veranda all evening, and we waltzed and two-stepped through the halls and living-rooms, and then walked down through the flower-scented garden and tested the scientific results of moonshine on sanity, and saw Titania dancing with Oberon (after they'd made it up!) and nasty Robin Goodfellow playing havoc with many men's — and girls' — best laid plans.

And then we had a cotillion. Think of it! Six men asked your butterfly friend to trip

it with — *them*, singularly. (For decency's sake, Anne, have a care that these Little-Jack-Horner see-what-a-great-boy-am-I letters fall into nobody's hands but yours! I feel like the prevaricator who wrote Marjorie Daw. I'm doing it all for *your* benefit!) Yes, really and truly, black and blue-ly, *six* men! First, Mr. Belden, with whom I danced, of course. (He had asked me the day before, at the club.) Then nice, quiet Mr. Cliveden, whom I *like*, thoroughly. (I suppose he thought he had to, as he took me in to dinner.) Then Dr. Mansfield. Then that lovable Yale boy, who looks like a baby giant done up in a white bib, in his evening linen. Then a Mr. Williams who is out here at the club for the summer. And then—then — then — yes, I'll tell it at last — *Sir Galahad!* For I've finally come to the dialogue or rather, perhaps, I've gone a little bit beyond it, for it belongs just before the cotillion.

But wouldn't you like to hear about the cotillion first? and about the lovely favors? and the pretty spirals and squirls and intricacies Mr. Walton led us into and out of? You *wouldn't*? Why, how queer! Well, if you won't, you won't, I suppose, and there's an end on't.

Well — take a long breath now, Anne — here is the little story which I've kept for the end of my letter because it came at the end of the long, happy fairy-tale of Friday's dinner and dance. Who is responsible for the superstition that Friday is ill-lucky? Its decidedly the best day of all — the last day always is with me, as you know.

I was leaning against the railing of the veranda, crouched well into the corner behind a screen of palms, with my head pressed against a supporting pillar — all alone, for I had dismissed my partner and told him I'd await the next one there — not exactly

there, but in a chair somewhere, out in the subdued light of the veranda — a wee bit tired of the glare and the chatter and the constant whirling indoors. It was so cool out there in the moonlight — so still and so beautiful, with the fitful twinkles of the bobbing Japanese lanterns, the vaporous gowns of strolling girls — a patch of darker blackness and a whitish blur of linen shirt-front, indicating the men beside them — and the music behind me surging and receding through the open windows, glad with the gaiety, the velocity, the soaring joy of the violins, half-sad, too, with the wailing under-tone of the 'cellos.

The passionate throb of it was in me, and when Mr. Mannering left me to find his next partner, I moved aside the palms and crept close to the railing, hoping to escape Dr. Mansfield's vigilance. I saw him come out on the veranda and peer around unsuccess-

fully and then start back; and then I forgot all about him and all about everything, save the magic and the beauty and the song of the night winds, and that

God's in His Heaven,
All's right with the world!

I don't know how long I stood there, silent, absorbed in it all, but after a while I felt that little curious, perceptive tremor that tells you somebody is sharing or watching, your reveries. I lifted my head from the pillar and looked straight into the eyes of Mr. Gresham. He was standing on the ground, leaning against the railing, too, but apart a little ways — his beautiful head thrown back where a ray of moonlight struck it, gravely searching my face with those gravely searching, analytical, dream-dreams and see-visions eyes of his. I don't think I was very much startled — I don't think I

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was really startled at all. He was so quiet and motionless, and his eyes were so full of the unutterable things I knew my own were full of. He seemed somehow to belong to the landscape and to fit in, rather than jar, with my thoughts.

I am ashamed to confess, Anne, I haven't the faintest idea how long we both stood gazing at each other, in that *understandable* sort of way, but I know that when I did remember, the knowledge came with a sudden shock, and then he started too, and straightened up, and I saw he was coming closer and was going to talk to me. And he did, Anne. He asked if I could give him the cotillion, and his voice was all trembly and husky, and it startled me so with its — to say the least — rather *importunate* demand, that I just sort of gasped and sputtered myself, and forgot to answer anything.

And then he got rather agitated and em-

barrassed, poor fellow, and his face became all emotional and excited, and he said he knew he hadn't any right to ask it or any right to speak to me at all, but it was all such a miserable, stupid mistake that first afternoon, and he didn't get Mrs. Walton to present him before we went up-stairs because he thought it would be remedied at dinner, and then afterwards he wanted it so much that he couldn't bear to mention it to anyone.

He said he would lie awake at night planning ways of meeting me — rescuing me from refractory chargers and dragging me out of the clutches of the harmful brigands with which his lively imagination had peopled the harmless hills round about. I *knew* there was a lot of whimsical humor folded away behind that serious mien, though he didn't say all that in the beginning, he was too agitated, poor chap. He said he had

followed me around watching me all evening; *hadn't* I noticed? (I hadn't, Anne, specially. There were so many watching — *not me* — in the doorways and windows) and when he saw me steal behind the palms he went down into the garden and stood outside the railing, waiting till I felt he was near — for he knew he would *have* to speak then, he couldn't stand it any longer. Wasn't it the strangest situation, Anne? And here I thought he didn't meet me because he didn't *want* to!

Of course he didn't say all that right then, Anne, but your Sir Galahad is a most impetuous and outspoken chap, I assure you, and after I'd caught my breath and explained about the cotillion, he told me a lot of nonsense — among it the sentences in the beginning of my letter — and was so outrageously unconventional in his conversational outpourings that my replies in

return, I'm afraid, were mainly compounded of gasps and starts and brilliant flashes of silence! He must have thought me wofully stupid, but I couldn't help it, Anne, he was so downright in his explanations, and so forcibly swept aside the customary barriers of social intercourse.

I pulled myself together and managed rather better after a time, however. That was after he vaulted the railing and dragged a chair into my palm-tree shelter and bade me sit down, and hurried away, quickly returning with an ice and a scarf (it was my own scarf and when I said it was a happy accident, he said it wasn't an accident at all, for he *knew* it was mine and had noticed where I left it!) and made me take both, and then perched on the railing himself, and talked for the longest while and in the dearest way about the country and his favorite hunter and his bull terrier, and

riding, and books and pictures, and life generally.

Please don't think he was egotistical and personal in an offensive sort of a way, for his manner was the superlative of courtesy and deference. He just wanted to be friends quickly, or rather he acted as if we were already friends and he wanted to discover all my tastes and desires and needs. Of course I had to frustrate any such intimate probing, and I made him talk about himself rather than me. That's how I learned so much about him. He is *dear*, Anne, so high-minded and noble. He quite lives up to that spiritual face of his. We had a beautiful time all alone there in the moonlight — a sort of world-forgetting, by-the-world-forgot, kind of a time. He is very keen and intuitive and clever — quite Arnoldish in a way — and his surmises are frequently as startling as his conversation.

"Sweetness and Light" — a very accurate summing of his personality, I conjecture.

Well, Anne, after I'd heard, or rather parried, a few specifications about the way I walked and the way I danced and the way I rode and the way I held my head, and one or more *other* important items like that, interspersed with requests for engagements to do things that would have to prolong my visit — unbeknownst to Mrs. Walton — into the week after next, I decided it was time — and *quite* time, too, I can hear you remark with your lips pressed together in tight disapproval — to go back to the ball-room and conventionality, and I did, in spite of the protests I heard outside on the veranda and the protests which met me within doors. I had missed the supper, but was just in time for the cotillion, and what more could any girl desire with a partner awaiting her pleasure like Mr. Belden, who dances as a wave

of the sea dances, but who does other things besides, as you know. He is coming over to luncheon to-morrow, to ride with us to the club, for the hunt.

I had the time of all my good times at the cotillion. Mr. Walton led and Mr. Gresham assisted him (he didn't have any partner), and it went with a dash and vim that made everyone's heart as light as his heels. The favors were cunning and attractive — I've thrown a whole bushel of them in the bottom of my trunk for your small sister — and I felt that my gown was as much of a success in the wee sma' hours when we filed up to bed as it was when I first came down. Isn't that an infallible manifestation of the perfection of my evening?

There, Anne! I've written myself out, and you too. This is all *banally* egotistical and silly, but you are pleased to imagine it's

the effect of the butterflies, and that, like the egg-woman with the abbreviated petticoats in Mother Goose, this is none of *I!*

Now I must scamper away, child, and take a long drink of this sparkling June sunshine. The house is all asleep, like the enchanted palace of old. Do you remember how the fairy prince woke the princess? I hope you *don't*, for that's a most amorous suggestion and fie upon me! But it couldn't happen here anyway. There are too many princesses. The prince would be scared at such a crowd of sleeping beauties.

Good-by, dear. Get well, well, *well!*

From ARNOLD GRESHAM, *Esquire*
To ROBERT COLTER, *Esquire*

Ryemouth,
Late Friday night.

CONGRATULATE me, old man, I've met her at last. I know you won't approve of the *Deus ex machina*, but I couldn't help it, on my life! I just *had* to do it, that way!

I didn't meet her last night, as I said I would, after all. Nobody would realize that I hadn't been presented, and she was so surrounded at dinner and afterwards, at a ball we drove somewhere for, that she didn't appear to be aware that such a person existed as the unmannerly being who did his

best to stand in her way and to get her face engraved on his memory. I suppose I *was* staring her out of countenance — no, not that, for nothing could disturb that air of high-bred serenity she wears so proudly — but I just couldn't *help* it, Bob. I don't appear to be able to turn my eyes away. There doesn't seem to be anything else worth looking at in the view!

I had a most *unhappy* time at the ball last night. I had to drive Miss Hereford and Mrs. Walton and another chap — that Harvard fellow — in the small trap, while Miss Exeter, Dr. Mansfield, Carlton Phelps, and all the others had the time of their lives in the opera bus. Sorry she didn't know me? Not she. I was too infinitesimal a nothing. I watched her through the windows waltzing around with a whole raft of fellows not a whit better than I — if I do say it who shouldn't — and yet here I was, reduced to

solitary confinement in the leeway of some sheltering palms, put there most obligingly to save me from being corralled into dancing with people I'm anything but enthusiastic about. But no matter about that. I didn't meet Miss Exeter, that's all; and I assure you, old fellow, it was quite as deep as a well and wide as a church door!

I lay awake the best part of the night, fortifying my courage with millions of strenuous resolutions for the morning. It came and passed, and so did my opportunity. I suppose I might have addressed her casually at breakfast, and afterwards, when we migrated to the veranda, but the truth is, Bob, everytime she appears in a different gown — and she always is so appearing, it seems to me — she looks so *differently* beautiful, if you catch my meaning, that it takes me ten minutes or more to *pummel* my senses into calm again, and then, of course, some other

chap has won the prize I coveted. I never realized before, Bob, how many superfluous men there are in the world, especially in this section of the globe!

Now, this morning at breakfast and afterwards, she wore one of those perforated misty effects in white. It rippled all around her feet, and stopped just above her elbows and you saw the dimples, and it showed her neck and her proud little head, and she wore a sash tied around her waist, like a child's. Well, of course it took me some time to master all the intricacies and hide-and-go-seeks of such a get-up as that, and just as I had about managed to know it by heart — that's the way she teaches me all my lessons, by *heart* — Mrs. Walton announced it was time to dress as we were going to ride over to the club for luncheon, and so, of course, off she went with the others.

Thank Heaven, said I to myself as I

scaled the stairs after her — thank Heaven at least, that Miss Hereford can't ride — and then I was so afraid she had learned since I last saw her, that I held my breath till I met her in the hall, dressed for driving. I was adamant to her seductive invitation — not that she really wanted *me*, old chap — it's just her way with any man. I thought to myself, here's your chance, Arnold, my boy. If there's one thing in the world you can do better than *nothing*, it's ride. Now up and at it, and don't come a cropper! But I did, Bob, I did. I flunked like the awkwardest novice.

She was so bewilderingly stunning, all in tan, with black gloves and a rough black sailor crowning that wonderful hair of hers, that, like the donkey I was, I let somebody else put her up, and forgot what I was there for until they were off and away in advance, and I had to dash after to catch them. And

then, of course, the other men swallowed her up, and when we got to the club a lot of new ones joined the fortifications around her and I don't know what I did. I was just grouchy and *miserable.*

Bob, I never saw a girl ride as she rides in my life, and you know we've seen some pretty good attempts at horsemanship. She sits so lightly, yet so surely; she carries her shoulders and head with such superb grace; she rises so exactly in rhythm with the movements of her beast; she's so easily master of her steed, and the lines of her figure and habit are faultless. Well — I didn't meet her, Bob. That's all.

Later in the afternoon we coached over to a tea somewhere, and Miss Exeter sat on the box seat with Mr. Walton, and she was all green froth and amber, like the sea at sundown. And I didn't meet her, though a mob of other men did. And then we coached

home and I watched the top of a green hat from my seat above its floating movements. And then she went up-stairs and strove again for my undoing, and the undoing of a vast and rapidly increasing army of worshipers. Where do the men come from! A plague upon them! The towns must be absolutely tenantless!

To-night we gave a dinner and ball, ourselves. I sat at table presided over by the most glitteringly beautiful being in the world, I truly believe, Bob. She looked like some brilliant, exotic moth or butterfly. Her gown was all a flickering tangle of bronze and gold and orange and yellow. Butterflies flew in her hair and fluttered against her shoulders and poised on the tips of her slippers. She was like a Rossetti dream of Psyche, with the warmth of her hair and expressive lips. People caught their breath as she came down-stairs, and

everyone asked who she was all evening, and wanted to meet her and dance with her, and she wasn't left an instant alone to enjoy the beauty of the night and the glory of the heavens. Poor little girl, no wonder she was weary!

Well, as I said, Bob, I sat at her table, but she ignored me at dinner and had no time for me afterwards, but I watched her and followed her furtively. I knew she would try and be alone out-doors, somewhere, sometime, through the evening, and when I saw her send her escort off and steal into the shadows of the plants on the veranda, I felt that my chance had come. Too long already had I let I dare not wait upon I will. And so I crept along the ground and leaned against a pillar near which she leaned, and watched her silent joy in the loveliness of the nature around her. And as she looked, I looked too and absorbed the elements of her

beautiful distinction as I had tried to do so many times before. And then, suddenly, she saw me. But she didn't seem to think it strange — this queer, silent tryst of two people who had never before even *talked* in common — and we looked deep into each other's eyes and I saw what I knew I should see, truth and honor and courage and kindliness, and a vision of beauty everywhere, because it looked through beauty. What *she* saw, God knows, but I hope to live up always to what I think she sought!

And then I spoke to her, Bob. Just what I said I don't now remember, but I think something idiotic about asking her to give me the cotillion — just as if she could, like any ordinary girl, at the eleventh hour, that way. But after a while things grew clear again and she let me stay, and we explained every detail of our *non*-acquaintance to each other for at least half an hour, when the

cotillion was announced and she wouldn't remain any longer. And then I went in, too, and helped Mr. Walton with the figures, and led her out as often as I dared.

"And oh, she dances such a way —
No sun upon an Easter day
Is half so *fair* a sight!" —

just as she rides, just as she walks, just as she talks, just as she dresses — just, in fact, like her own *different* self.

Good-night, Bob. It's time to turn in. The moon says: Fair weather to-morrow!

ARNOLD.

From Miss MARGARET EXETER
To Miss ANNE SUMNER

Ryemouth,
Saturday noon.

I'VE just had the *best* time, Anne, you could possibly imagine! I haven't more than a second to tell you about it, but I must vent my enthusiasm in a line or two anyway.

After I finished that long letter this morning I started to go out in the wonderful sunshine, and just as I opened my door there stood Elinor Martin about to come in, to see if I were awake yet. She said she'd had such a good time she couldn't sleep either, but had been up for a long while watching

the sun-sparkles on the lake at the foot of the garden, until she just *couldn't* withstand its fascination any longer. *Did* I have a bathing-suit with me? and *would* I come out at once and try the water?

Of course I had a bathing-suit, as you know, and of course I was amenable to the other proposition, so she tiptoed back along the hall, called Nancy Shippen, who was also awake, and the three of us got into our bathing-suits as quickly as we could, and then trooped softly out, down the stairs and out onto the veranda, helping ourselves as we passed to three very smart looking driving coats, conveniently ready for our disposal on the backs of some chairs. I don't know yet whom they belonged to, but I have a shrewd suspicion that *mine* was some of the surplus grandeur of Sir Galahad — from its general air of unimpeachable correctness, and the funny little twinkle in his eyes as he

helped me into it, wet bathing-suit and all, when I was reluctantly forced to leave my new plaything to get ready for luncheon. But there! I am anticipating, as usual.

We went through the garden without any one meeting us, threw our borrowed plumage over a stone bench, and splashed into the water, giggling and shrieking — they are two of the nicest girls, Anne, I've ever met! — and waded out a little distance and then struck valiantly forth for the raft. The water was awfully warm and the lake is really nothing more than a tiny, picturesque bubble, so we weren't a bit nervous, though it was deep enough out at the raft to allow us to dive off in fine form.

We were having the time of our visit, daring each other to perform all sorts of bravado stunts, when we heard a shout from the shore and there stood Dr. Mansfield and Carlton Phelps in bathing attire, just about

to strike out for us, and Sir Galahad, also in bathing costume, launching a small yacht which he headed our way. They had seen us from the windows and followed as quickly as they could, and when the sail-boat reached us on the second tack, with her sail bellied out over the water and the tiny scuds of white-caps dancing merrily over the edge of the taffrail — and her skipper at the tiller looking like some valiant Norse viking, we all scrambled aboard, and up-ed and off-ed for foreign shores,

Strange counteries for to see.

It was simply *great*, Anne. Mr. Gresham let me mind the tiller, and we fairly *flew* along in the fresh June breeze — backwards and forwards, sideways and criss-cross. It was the most exhilarating sport I've had since I've been here, and I'd be at home on the ocean wave still, if they hadn't called us

to shore with a gong — six happy, laughing, congenial water-sprites, crouched close together on the deck of the pretty sloop, as we sailed — as we sailed!

And, Anne, it wasn't all a dream last night about Sir Galahad. He still wants to know me, if his eyes speak true!

From Miss MARGARET EXETER
To Miss ANNE SUMNER

Ryemouth,
Late Saturday afternoon.

HERE'S another tiny note, Anne, telling another happy-ever-afterwards story. I'll just have time to slip it in before dinner. This makes *three* to-day. How is that for this busy little Jack Horner?

I've had the most exhilarating dash 'cross country this afternoon — over fences and hedges and ditches and stubble-fields. I felt as the centaurs must have felt, or Shelley's west wind, or a yacht with the breeze a-beam, or the ship with the engine that found itself,

or anything else that was buoyant and free and untrammeled and uncontrollable! Oh, it was *such* fun, Anne!

Sir Galahad said I rode as fearlessly as a man, and he certainly ought to know, for we seemed to be always jumping the same stretch of fence or to make for the same angle of vantage in the field. If I could only ride as fearlessly as he rides, or *anyway* like him, I'd give half my kingdom, gladly. He is the most wonderful thing on a horse Anne, you could possibly fancy, his great, long, lithe body — so supple, so sinuous — in perfect accord with the slightest move of his hunter. I've never seen such superb control of an animal before. And then the pink of his coat, Anne, and the blue of his eyes!

Everybody rode well, all the men anyway, and a good many of the girls. There is a Miss Sutton of Louisville here, visiting the Trowbridges. She isn't pretty and you

always feel rather aggrieved when a girl from Louisville isn't a beauty, but she is tremendously effective on a horse. She and I both got a fine start and were the only girls in at the death, and of course we received all manner of applause and congratulations from Mr. Cliveden, Dr. Mansfield, Mr. Belden, Mr. Williams, and others — Sir Galahad too, of course, only he just sort of looked his approval. He's a *dear*, Anne, *really*. I'm so glad I *did* meet him after all, and I'm so happy, too, it all came about in that out-of-the-ordinary way. But then if you knew him you wouldn't be surprised that it did. You would never expect him to be conventional.

Mr. Cliveden, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Belden came here for luncheon, and then we all rode over to the club afterwards — that is, everybody did, except Miss Hereford and Mr. Andrews — they drove off in the most

stunning fashion in the polo cart. She's the best put together woman, Anne, I'll ever be likely to encounter. And she's *crazy* about Sir Galahad, and I'm afraid — I'm afraid — he's rather crazy about her!

Now I must go make myself beautiful for dinner. We are to have it at the club, and I'm to drive over with Dr. Mansfield, drive home with Sir Galahad, eat supper with Mr. Cliveden, dance the cotillion with Carlton Phelps, waltz first with Dr. Mansfield and second with Mr. Belden, and two-step, waltz, and parade the verandas and grounds with a whole long list of miscellaneously attractive partners!!! Don't you think your volatile Jonathan, David, is a regular Three-times-three, Hip-Hip-Hurrah, Won't go-home-until-morning kind of a belle?

Now, don't trouble to be truthful, child. I want the prevarication that turneth away wrath and perverteth the judgment.

From Miss MARGARET EXETER
To Miss ANNE SUMNER

Ryemouth,
Late Saturday night.

I TOLD you she was crazy about Mr. Gresham, Anne, and she is, she is, she *is!* Oh, I do *dislike* her so! How dared she say the things she did to me!

She followed me into my room here, after I'd bade the others good-night, under pretense of asking for some quinine, and once in, she stayed and stayed and *stayed*, and talked and talked and *talked* till all sleep was gone from my eyes. I've been perched on the window ledge for the past ten minutes try-

ing to free my mind from her presence. But she's a specter that won't be banished. I'll have to *talk* her away with you. Do you care being used as an exorcism?

Oh, dear, Oh, dear, Oh, *dear!* How I detest, abhor, and *execrate* gossip! And here I've been forced to sit for the past half hour, parrying, discrediting, *enduring*, such a torrent of suavely conveyed insinuations against the women and men of this house-party — Mr. Gresham in particular — until I feel that the air of my pretty room is polluted, and I'm nothing short of a dishonorable wretch, forgetful of decency and courtesy and the demands of *noblesse oblige.*

I don't see *why* she should have selected *me* as the victim of her spleen, unless it was that I drove home from the club with Mr. Gresham. That seemed to rankle ; but as she drove over with him I can't understand why she should mind. She had her innings

as well as I. But she seemed to think that perhaps I would imagine I'd had *more* — that his purely friendly attentions I'd be idiot enough to construe into marks of personal devotion, unless she helped to disillusion my simpleton intellect. And she proceeded to put her philanthropic schemes into instant effect!

She practically told me, Anne, that no hostess should be without him for he could always be relied upon to be nice and kind to the *new* girls! That he possessed the fortunate gift of being able to concentrate his eyes and thoughts on the person he was with for the moment, even though the girl he most longed to talk to happened to be right at his elbow with another man! It really was a dangerous accomplishment, though, in a way, for of course the *new* girl was never able to penetrate his armor of polite disguise, and the gleam of the metal invariably

hurt her heart. There was no question, of course, of *his* fire-proof invulnerability. One needn't look to *him* for Achilles' heel!

She knew him so *well* — she understood him so *thoroughly* — for of course they had been the most *intimate* of friends for a *number* of years! She realized he hadn't the *slightest* intention of harming anyone, but sometimes the results were disastrous nevertheless, and then she really *had* to chide him! And he took it *so* nicely and really *promised* her he would be more careful; but of course men are men, and once in a while he forgot, *even then*!

And then she started to enumerate the names of some of the victims, intending, I suppose, to finish with mine, but I stopped her eloquence with an abrupt change of subject, and she hadn't the courage to resume. Oh, Anne, I *was* in such a rage and I *am* in such a rage —! But there, let us

try to forget it all. I'll tell you about the cotillion and let's see if we can't drive away all my distemper. Only, one thing, Anne, I want to say now. I don't believe a single syllable of her insinuations, either against Mr. Gresham or any other man or woman, under this roof! *There!* Now let us be happy. A merry heart goes all the day. Mine seems in danger of tripping all night too.

I had a very enjoyable time at the dinner and dance. The club-house was beautifully decorated in June roses, and the cotillion favors were all pretty and pink to correspond — June too. (Needless to say, I kept mine away from my head.) I drove over with Dr. Mansfield, or rather, I drove *him* over. I do like him so much, Anne. He is so honest and reliable and sensible and in earnest, and it does me no end of good to come in contact, once in a while, with a man

to whom life is a measure to be filled, carefully, conscientiously, with the best contents purchasable with striving.

I sat next to Mr. Gresham at dinner — Mrs. Walton's arrangement — and then waltzed and two-stepped more or less with everybody — once, with great éclat, with Sir Lucius O'Trigger. He was fine sport, Anne, and I *made* him learn to two-step. Then I talked with rollicking Mr. Belden at supper, with nice, quiet, observant Mr. Cliveden as a foil on my other hand. Then I danced the cotillion with that blessing from Heaven and Yale, Carlton Phelps. Oh, he was so smartly clothed, and so impressively pressed, and so cherubic as to countenance, and so infectious as to spirits, and so courteous as to manners, and so bubblingly happy and at peace with the world. There never was gallant like young Lochinvar! I'm sure, if he'd whispered one word in *my* ear as we

neared the hall door, I'd have light to the croup, too!

We had a beautiful time together, he and I, and the prospect of "the game" is most alluring. I can hear your cry of "Shame," for entrapping an unwary youth, and enticing him — spider-and-fly like — away from the girl he's fond of. But I didn't, Anne, *honestly*. Believe me. He danced with her a lot of times early in the evening, and was relieved, I know, when he found he didn't have to eat supper with me, so he could go back to her — and I made him talk about her and he said the *nicest* things — and I'm going to pass them all on to her the first chance I get to-morrow. She looked so pretty, too — all in shimmering white, as was — *were*, I mean — Nancy Shippen and Mrs. Walton and Mrs. Masters, and your devoted correspondent.

We were quite a *peace* party, were we not?

a sort of "Purity League," as Mr. Walton prettily put it. There was one blot in the 'scutcheon, however. Miss Hereford was dazzling in scarlet tulle, the red badge of discord, war, *pestilence!* No, I didn't *mean* that, Anne. Please pretend I didn't say it. She has her reasons, no doubt, or she wouldn't have talked that way. Perhaps she thinks I needed the warning. Anyhow, I'll try and live up to our compact, David — In her tongue is the law of kindness. There, I feel better already! The words are a talisman, *truly*. Her gown was a wonderful triumph of art and she was marvelously, glitteringly handsome. I don't blame Mr. Gresham at all for the intimacy she intimated! Nor for treading the mazes of the cotillion with her! Nor for sitting at her side at supper! And at dinner, though he wasn't responsible for that — nor half through the preliminary dances, in the dusk and magic of the veranda!

And yet, Anne, things are all rather queerly jumbled. For he drove home with me and he acted, whenever he took me out for a favor, as though he were waiting for the chance all evening — though perhaps that's just his way, the way Miss Hereford referred to — and he handed me up so carefully, and *made* me put on a coat of his over my lace coat — he wore the one I'd purloined in the morning — I *knew* it was his! — and then drove back the longest way round — following the princess through the hills, on her moonlighted trail — which brought us home some minutes after the others, *most* improperly. I wasn't to blame, Anne, for I didn't notice the road was different. We kept up such a speedy pace that I thought we would arrive first. But we didn't, and everybody was waiting on the veranda, and Mr. Walton and Dr. Mansfield came forward to help me down, but before they could

offer, Sir Galahad had swung me out and made me say yes to letting him walk to church with me in the morning. Perhaps Miss Hereford heard us. I don't know, nor do I care — *much!*

And then the things he said to me, Anne, the dear things about his home and his mother and his little kid sister — and the father who is dead — and his hopes and pursuits and longings — and even his most hidden ideals, Anne! It was like presenting me with a magnifying glass and bidding me search and *see*. And I *did* see, Anne, right down to the clear, blue, untroubled depths of a serenely noble nature. No, he isn't like *that*, Anne — I know, I *know!*

Good-night, dear. It won't be long till I see you! Keep your throat rested till I come!

MARGARET.

From ARNOLD GRESHAM, *Esquire*
To ROBERT COLTER, *Esquire*

Ryemouth,
Late Saturday night.

DEAR BOB:

I DIDN'T intend to inflict another epistolary diatribe on you to-night, but the truth is, I'm too restless and wide-awake to think of sleep for hours yet. My pipe doesn't seem to be able to furnish its customary solace for troubled spirits, and so I turn to you. How many times before have I done the same thing, old fellow! There's nothing like a Fidus Achates, is there, after all. *Prosit!*

I can't really tell you, Bob, whether I've

had a "happy day," as my kid sister describes it, or an unhappy one — or rather, I know the day has been all right, but I'm not so certain of the night. I don't believe I exactly hunger for the joys of waltzes and cotillions. The club-house isn't over big, and there are such mobs of apparently unattached men, and they always want the girl you want, and the girl you want always seems to want them, not *you*!

And then, circumstances and an imbecilic lack of character join hands to see that you are surely being imposed upon, and you haven't the nerve to get up and wrestle with fate, and if you did, it would throw you anyway. For Fate is a femninie divinity that shapes your ends, but beautiful, though — unlike any of those ghastly sisters of Michael Angelo's — which makes your throw-down all the harder.

And so, Bob, you don't have an absolutely

halcyon kind of time at dances and suppers, but you try to make up coming home. And if you take a slight advantage of people's lack of knowledge of country thoroughfares, it's the moon that's at fault and the glamour in your eyes — not you, of course, Bob — not you!

And if you talk a lot about yourself, it's just because somehody else won't talk about *herself*. And if you force somebody else to say yes into taking you to church in the morning, just because, if she tried to say no, you'd protest the decision before a crowd on a veranda and not care a jot what they heard or said — it's only because necessity disregards all laws of politeness — and that your manhood is coming back to assert its claims, and that things may *yet* be forced your way. I guess, after all, Bob, I *did* have a "happy day."

Six of us went bathing and sailing in the

morning — Yale and the débutantes and the hospital ward, and the Girl Who is Different, and the man who would like to be. And sometimes people resemble some wonderful species of water-nymph in their bathing-suits, and sometimes they look like a winged victory at the tiller of a sail-boat — and then you forget to mind your helm, and you wish that your home was always on the rolling deep and that there wasn't any mainland, and that islands had yet to be discovered!

And then you go home and find more men around, and you grin when they announce they've come for luncheon, like the liar that you are — and then you give up your mermaid, because you can't help yourself, to others who can't know her or understand her *half* as well as you, and you call it fate and wish you could take it out of somebody who would stand up to you like a man. And then, afterwards, you all ride over to

the club for the hunt, and you manage, in spite of the efforts of the opposition, to keep close hold (metaphorically) of your rehabited water-nymph, and you watch that no harm comes near her and you follow her in at the death.

And then, perhaps, if you stand well up in the graces of your hostess, you may sit next Diana at dinner, and you find that she is all gowned in white and you mark how it contrasts with the sunburn in her cheeks, and the sunset glints of her sun-kissed hair. And then you realize there's a man at her other side, and you find the thorn in your roses red, and that the beer and skittles have vanished from your place at table.

And then you sit out on the veranda and listen to purring when you want to do something with an ax (only felling trees, of course). And then you strive somehow to walk through a beastly cotillion. And then

it's all over and the clock strikes twelve, and you feel like Danny Deever should a reprieve have arrived in time.

And then you insist on somebody putting on your coat, and then you put yourself into something somebody insisted on wearing without your leave, in the morning — and then you drive away in the moonlight and forget that the evening opened in clouds.

I guess I had a pretty fair time, after all. Balances adjust themselves sometimes, if you only have patience to wait. It's hard on the nerves, though, and hard too, on friends. You know what I think of you for listening, Bob.

Good-night, old chap.

ARNOLD.

From Miss MARGARET EXETER
To Miss ANNE SUMNER

Ryemouth,
Sunday noon.

SIR GALAHAD mailed yesterday's letters to you, on our way to church this morning. He also mailed one of his own. I'm glad he couldn't read beneath the envelopes, aren't you, and perhaps it's just as well *I* couldn't either. He looked a wee bit quizzical when I put them into his hand, and he coolly turned them over without leave, and read the same sprawly address on the four bulky missives. Then his eyes apologized, though he gave them first a little defiant shake, saying, "I'm glad it isn't a man, any-

way — " adding quickly, in rather a shamed voice, "Forgive me, but I couldn't help it."

And then I told him the whys and wherefores of our assiduous correspondence, and how much he and you and I had missed because of that invidious old attack of tonsilitis, and he listened with that little grave air of absorbed interest which is so flattering because it is so concentratedly yours for the time being — and he said he liked my way of bringing the hills and the lake and the flowers and the June sunshine and air of the country into your sick-room, and that if I would take him, too, in with me, he'd tread very softly and speak very low, and perform any office that the privilege entailed. (He doesn't know how often he's been entertaining an angel unawares, does he?)

And then he added some dear things about *you* — I'll save them till I get home

and then deal them out gingerly, one by one, exacting trade-lasts in return, coin for coin — and then some pretty speeches about the loyalty of such a friendship as ours, and about my being able to snatch the time to get the letters in, between engagements. I simply mention this in passing, as our acquaintance the pork merchant casually remarks, to prove that this Sir Galahad of yours is a great observer of the *little* things of life — noting and doing the little kindnesses which most leave undone or despise. Don't think, *please*, that the letters have been any trouble to me. I've had leisure enough, as you know, in the cracks and interstices of my many patterned mosaic holidays, and it has just increased the fun and excitement to tell it all to you, right as it happened. I'd have given up the fun itself, willingly, *gladly*, rather than missed the recounting of it to you, which is certainly an idiotic speech,

descriptive of mental vacuum, but it shows, at least, that the heart beats true. *Now*, will you be good? And *will* you get well?

We had such a beautiful walk to church. It was such a beautiful morning for a walk, all sunny and shiny and soft, and green and blue and musical. The Sunday "Peace be to you" lay over it all, and it had the happy serenity of a good conscience. The fields and sky looked brushed with Sabbath cleanliness and were decorated with their loveliest boutonnières and their fleeciest lace-cap clouds. And the birds were simply *pouring* their little souls out in melody — all that had life and breath sang to the Lord! I saw a whole row of birds chanting on a branch of a tree, just as if posing for the sermon of St. Francis, and to my joy, Anne, Sir Galahad began to repeat the words; and when I clapped my hands and gave a little

cry of delight, he laughed consciously, and looked so pleased that I was pleased!

Oh, he is a *dear*, Anne, simple, unaffected, ingenious, and so likingly and appealingly high-minded, high-souled! And then, he is so good to look at, which counts for, as you know, even if the opposite doesn't always score against — with such a long, lithe, agile figure — such strengthful, trustable shoulders — such well-shaped feet and sensitive, refined, capable hands — such a good show of chin and breadth of intelligent forehead — such well-brushed hair and shining teeth — such wonderful, glowing, changeable, analyzing, eloquent, *inscrutable* eyes!

And then — I'm almost ashamed to confess it, — it is *such* a joy to have him so smartly dressed — to know that his clothes are so irreproachably cut — that his ties and gloves and linen and shoes are in such irreproachable taste — that he wears his hat

at quite the right angle and that it is quite the newest style of hat! I know you think I ought to be bowed in confusion at myself, and on Sunday morning too, and all that. I suppose you believe I'd cavil at the Venus of Milo because she wasn't done up in a Parisian gown — or that I'd frown down the attentions of the Hermes because I didn't consider wings the proper decorations for heels and shoulders. But your judgment is at fault, my scornful young Mentor. It isn't that I love not my Caesar at all, in dressing-robe and slippers, but that I love him *more* with the marks of his Rome upon him — the insignia of his heritage, his power, his place, his degree!

Well, as I was saying, when you rudely interrupted me, we had a beautiful time and a beautiful walk, through four miles of fresh, vernal country, to church. Nobody was up when I came down-stairs — I am the only

Catholic in the house, and I had had my coffee in my room and Mrs. Walton knew last night that I was going to walk into town with Mr. Gresham and wouldn't require the horses — except Sir Galahad awaiting my arrival on the veranda. His eyes looked their pleasure in my linen coat and skirt, my black hat and gloves, my pretty embroidered waist. You needn't address your sermons solely to me, Anne. Men notice clothes just as much as women do. They'd a great deal rather be seen with a stunning girl than a pretty, sloppy one, even if they liked the latter a wee bit better. I'm not upholding the principle of the thing, I'm merely stating a fact. I'm not denying that men are foolish. God Almighty made them to match the women — which is Mrs. Poyser for you, transposed.

And Sir Galahad anyway is no alien to his race. His eyes traveled up and down

the lines of my suit with discriminating intelligence. He looked before and after, and *I* didn't sigh for what was not, for though I felt like a soldier on inspection drill, I was well sustained with the satisfying consciousness that it was the very best cut coat and skirt of any yet worn in the house-party. Sir Galahad appeared to share my pleasing consciousness, for when his eyes finally returned to my face, and I laughed knowingly, with my hand raised at attention, he laughed in return and nodded "yes" emphatically, though the color burned deeper than usual in his sun-tanned face. It's the funniest thing, Anne, but I *do* feel as if we had been friends for ages and ages!

And then we tramped down through the garden and out into the fields to church. He walks very well, with a springing, buoyant step and a long stride which suits mine finely. We covered the distance in sprinting

style, following the road, as Mass was at ten and it was after nine when we started, and we arrived with some seconds still to our credit after declining the invitation of a hospitable farmer to squeeze into the already bulging interior of his Sunday-renovated-week-day carryall.

The church is a pretty little white wood structure, immaculately clean and tastefully frescoed. We found the usual crowd of brushed and scrubbed Sunday loiterers out on the sidewalk and grass-plot, awaiting the summons of the bell which a sunny-haired acolyte started to ring as we approached. The music was somewhat quavering and uncertainly keyed at times. I was dying to offer to sing myself, but hated to be considered an officious summer interferer by the much-in-evidence lady choir-master.

But the priest who said Mass was the dearest, most venerable old man, whose face

was just an apotheosis of the Sermon on the Mount. And when he preached, Anne, or rather, gently *talked* to us, it was simply the beautiful doctrine of brotherly affection and forbearance and helpfulness you would imagine would come from his lips. Mrs. Walton had told me I'd love him, last night. He's a great friend of hers and Mr. Walton — they send the horses into the village for him and have him out to dine every week — and after Mass was over Mr. Gresham and I went into the small vestry and paid our homage to him, and he talked in the sweetest, most fatherly manner to both of us, and said "God bless you, my children," when we started to go away. And Sir Galahad's mouth trembled a little as he said to me outside the door, "I only hope I can live up to that blessing all through the day."

And so we began our ramble out into the June world again. We wandered through

the streets of the quaint, old-fashioned town, dropped your letters in the rural post-office — his, too (I wonder if it was to some girl), exchanged the top of the morning with a land-blown ancient mariner and Cincinnatus resting from his ploughshare, caught a rill from the town pump as we passed the cupola-ed city-hall, separated two pugnacious urchins who were disturbing the peace of the morning, and sampled the odors of whole squares of stewing family dinners, besides catching an echo or two of several family broils.

And then we turned away into the fields again, down a pretty rose-bordered grass-grown lane. It was early, only a little past eleven, and the others would just be starting for a drive and we weren't to have luncheon until two, so we took the longest way round and came home 'cross country and the hills. It isn't quite two yet. We arrived

a little after one, and rested out on the veranda until we heard the noise of wheels approaching, when I skipped in-doors to you.

What did we talk about, Sir Galahad and I?

> About ships and shoes and sealing-wax,
> And cabbages and kings —

only they had prettier names. About the rosy beauty of Mistress June and the joy of her winds and fields and skies and blossoms. About the dryads that dwell in her oaks, and the mermaids that people her brooks, and ripple her streams with the flaps of their saucy tails. About the princess and her prince, over beyond the mountains. About the light that never lay on sea or land. About the visions one sees and the dreams one dreams.

And then there were intervals, Anne, in which we talked mainly of Sir Galahad and

me — little parentheses of conversation which dove down beneath the clothes and the manner and the panoply of society, and made the real him and the real me recognize the framework of similarity which will make us better friends for *aye!*

Oh, how I do love, love, *love* this beautiful country — excepting the katy-dids at night! And how I love the peace of its Sunday stillness and the joy of this company of happy, congenial people. All but — no, I won't mention her, either. I promised myself I'd be good.

And may God help me to *be* good, now and hereafter and forever.

And may He bless us all, His children.

MARGARET.

From Miss MARGARET EXETER
To Miss ANNE SUMNER

Ryemouth,
Sunday night.

IF it weren't for that pestiferous katy-did, Anne, you wouldn't have another letter to-night. I'm beginning to think I'm spoiling you, giving in to your whims in this fashion. Sleep would be better for both of us, tired nature's sweet restorer. Only, the katy-did outside my window refuses to let me be restored. And then I'm not tired anyway, only restless and excited and contrary — for I've been singing, which always means stirring up the tumults within.

Well, I've spent a very interesting after-

noon and evening — a sort of good-by period, seeing and saying and doing things for the last pleasurable time. Even to write it, Anne, makes me curiously unhappy, which is queer, rather, when I never was here before, and never knew any of the people except dear Mrs. Walton and her husband. But then, every one has been so lovely to me, and they are all so charming in themselves, and we have done such enjoyable, *intimate* things together, that it hasn't taken long to knit us all closely together in friendship.

All, that is, except two of us — or rather, perhaps, I'll say *one*. For I had a nice little talk with the Harvard man while he helped me with the tea things this afternoon, and he wrote out his Cambridge address for me, and made me promise I'd surely send him word if I came out to Boston this fall.

"Or even to New York," he added persuasively. "It's only a step to run down

there, and you must let me know just after you arrive" — which was civil, to say the least. If he was thus cordially hospitable to me, what do you suppose he said to Miss Hereford — it was only a step, probably, from Boston to San Francisco!

I am still *persona non grata* to her Lady Disdain and it isn't my fault, *really*, Anne, for I tucked all that disagreeable gossip of last night away out of sight, in an unused cupboard of my memory, and I've tried to be decent and amicable and conciliatory, and even to go more than half way. But she doesn't like me and will have none of me, nor does she find it agreeable, I fancy, my knowing Mr. Gresham in this fashion now, after our mutual avoidance of the first two days. Perhaps it's merely a case of

I do not like thee, Dr. Fell —
The reason why I cannot tell.

Still, I'm very glad she was here. I shall always think of her as the handsomest all around, well put together, best foot forward, woman I have ever encountered. I frankly confess, I'd like to ask Sir Galahad if his opinion coincides with mine, but his eyes and mind are too keen for experiments. I'm afraid he'd guess my reasons, as Œdipus was a dark lantern in comparison with him, and I can't lay the flattering unction to my soul that I'm as stony-faced and expressionless as the sphinx.

If I've signed a truce with Harvard, I'm still true-blue to Yale. I certainly am going to send *him* word sometime, whether I can make "the game" or not. He sat next to me at luncheon and down by the river's side afterwards, and he's just the most lovable mixture of boyishness and manhood, of conventionality and recklessness, of fun and seriousness, imaginable. He is still

vacillating at the end of the visit between dear little Elinor Martin and me, just as he was the opening night. We pretend to be deadly rivals and have great sport over it *entre nous*. As she has another ardent admirer — a man with the Vails — and I'm not exactly left lonely and alone, *quite* always, you know, between us we drive poor Mr. Drink-her-down, Drink-her-down, to distraction, or to the tender ministrations of Nancy Shippen, to whose débutante mind any man is a man for a' that. She's a nice little thing, though, and will have more sense and discrimination another year, and I hope to meet her again. She very kindly pressed me to send her word whenever I traveled within hailing distance of Baltimore.

So did Elinor Martin, who lives there too. I certainly should like to accept that invitation some day. She's so winningly shy and sunny and attractive, and she confides her

little girlish hopes and fears to you, and is very appealing and sweet. I'm going to ask her up with Carlton Phelps — he said he'd come back for it — for a week later in the summer, and then you can love her — him too — for yourself. Only, you mustn't be bad to my Yale boy, Anne. I want him always happy.

I had a nice little walk and a nice little talk with Dr. Mansfield this afternoon, between luncheon and tea-time. It was funny, but strolls and interviews *à deux* were the order of the early afternoon. It was that ridiculous Sir Lucius O'Trigger who proposed the plan. He said he never had time to be polite in the morning, and he wanted to take a tender farewell of Mrs. Walton, far from the prying eyes of Mr. Walton, and would any other man be enough of a man to follow his example? Of course the proposition met with unanimous acceptance on

the spot. Ten-minute conversations were named as the limit to the dual eloquence; if you weren't back on the veranda in fifteen, Sir Lucius constituted himself official bell-man, and started through the gardens ringing a cow-bell which he picked up somewhere, and shouting at the top of his voice, "Oyez, Oyez, Oyez! To whom it may concern! Lost, strayed or stolen!" — and then followed such a nice derangement of epitaphs — yours and the man's — that instant capitulation and a mad dash for the house were the sole prescriptions possible, to cool your scorched faces.

So it was thus, you see, that I had a nice little good-by chat with Dr. Mansfield — thus, and a refusal to go off with Sir Galahad. He asked me before he asked Miss Hereford, and I wasn't going to have her think I was crazy about having him beside me. Anyway, he'd had more than his share in the

morning. He looked so hurt, though, that I felt *mean* afterwards, about not giving an excuse, especially as he didn't say a word but just looked at me an instant with the pained eyes I've seen sometimes in an injured dog. Then he turned abruptly away and went over to Miss Hereford. Perhaps he was glad I gave him the chance. He may have asked me first just because I was *new* and *strange!*

Well, anyway, I refused to let anything interfere with my enjoyment of Dr. Mansfield's society. I like him unqualifiedly, Anne, as I've told you many times before, and I hope to have the pleasure of letting you share my enjoyment the second Saturday and Sunday in July. He asked me if I were going to be at home and whether he might come up to see me, and I told him I should be only too happy to see him again and then, and so it arranged itself. He is

up and off early to-morrow, back to his hospital practise in Cincinnati. So is Mr. Masters, whose wife will follow later in the day. So is Mr. Walton, whose solicitor demands his presence. I promised to get up to see them off and consequently was obliged to bring the hurt look once again into Sir Galahad's melancholy blue eyes.

He never came my way *once* all afternoon, but at dinner I found that Mrs. Walton had placed him beside me. Of course — irony of circumstance — Miss Hereford sat on his other hand and so he didn't have any leisure for me or I for him. I was laughing and parrying Mr. Masters' sallies. All at once — so vehemently that it made my nerves tingle unpleasantly — he turned abruptly from a conversation with Miss Hereford and asked, or rather *demanded*, if I would get up early and go for a ride with him before breakfast. Of course I had to say I couldn't,

and he promptly turned round again and forgot I existed, until he pulled out my chair and bowed very low, without apparently caring to meet my eyes.

We've cemented our differences since, Anne, or at least I think we have, but I'll see that he suffers the consequences of his neglect to-morrow. Only, to be honest, I'm not quite sure it was neglect. Only, I *wish* he wouldn't look at me in that pained sort of way. It hurts me too, and I can't have my heart upset in that manner. *Everything* hurts a wee bit to-night. I've been singing, as I told you.

Well, I'm afraid I'll never get through the story of my afternoon and evening, if I continue to amble on in this halting method of progression. It's like Penelope's spinning, drawing out at night what one does in the day. About four o'clock everyone from all the country houses around drove over

for afternoon tea which we — or, to be quite accurate, *I* — served out of doors in the garden, in its prettiest golden corner. It was all a yellow feast, the sun, the flowers, the cakes and sandwiches and ices, my gown, my orange head — "a propitiatory offering to Apollo," said Sir Lucius O'Trigger, "with a burnt-almond muse at the nectarurn." I had *such* a good time— parting is such sweet sorrow — saying farewell and arranging plans for future meetings. Of course, everybody is to see everyone else again, especially Mr. Belden, Mr. Cliveden, and I. It was quite after seven when we speeded the final guest reluctantly away, and then we tore up-stairs for a hasty change of costume.

I chose my new, long, black princess gown, all black with just an edge of white outlining the square bodice. Dinner was at eight and I told you how we were arranged.

Afterwards, we sat rather quietly out on the veranda for a time, but the air grew chilly, and Mrs. Walton proposed music and indoors. So we trooped inside and Mrs. Walton played for us, then Mrs. Masters, and then Dr. Mansfield. Then they asked for volunteer singers, and Miss Hereford went to the piano and sang some things of Nevin's, really very sweetly. I frankly confess I was surprised. I didn't know it was *in* her.

Then Mr. Andrews and Carlton Phelps gave us what they dubbed "close harmony," in some tuneful college glees. Then there were several refusals — Sir Galahad said he didn't know how and Mrs. Walton smilingly bore testimony to his sincerity. Miss Shippen protested she never sang a note in her life, and Elinor Martin said "me too," with a difference of grammatical construction. Then Mr. Masters arose, came over to me

and offered his arm with a profound bow, saying,

"'First she said she couldn't,
And then she said she wouldn't,
And then she said, Well, I'll see,'"

and stood waiting I suppose, for my declination in scorn. But I laughingly stood up and went over to the piano, and sat down quietly and began to play.

Now, Anne, you know, if there is one thing in the world I can do well — really *well* — it is sing. But I never sang before as I did to-night. I was never before so irrevocably at the mastery of that golden spirit of music which beats in my heart, in my throat, in my brain, in my lungs, in every fiber of my being — which is the *real* I, or better, perhaps, the *ideal* I, whatever else rings dross!

And I sang and sang and sang — Schumann and Schubert and Grieg — oratorios,

love-lyrics, lullabies. Nobody asked me to go on, nobody asked me to stop. The silence was tense, vibrating, appreciative. It seemed to me that I was telling the whole story of these country days in music; that I was painting the beauty of the June world; that I was laying bare the passion and the pride of hearts, to offer balm and ointment; that I was sailing with Vikings and diving with mermaids and curbing the spirit of a mettlesome war-horse. Then I thought of the snow-haired priest blessing us all, His children, and I sang an Ave Maria — now and at the hour of our death. Then, to relieve the strain of attention, I modulated into some child's verses of Stevenson's, the pretty little chant of the river and Elgar's lovely In Haven; and then, when I turned away at last, I was ready to have them greet me in words — which they did — all, that is, but Mrs. Walton, who just softly kissed my cheek,

and Sir Galahad who gripped my hand in tight good-night while his lips moved and said nothing, and his eyes looked unfathomable gratitude, right through mine, into my heart.

And that's how I know we are friends again, though neither has spoken a word.

I've just had a little visit from Mrs. Walton. She said the dearest things about my music and begged me to consent to a pet plan of hers, for kidnapping Mrs. Masters and me, and keeping us here after the others, till Tuesday. She asked *me* for a week, but of course I couldn't think of it. We were not to leave anyway until three, and the rest are to get off at noon, and Mr. Gresham is to be with her. Did I tell you he was to stay

on with the Waltons for the remainder of the week?

We were not to let anybody know, because otherwise the others might think Mrs. Walton lacking in hospitality if she didn't press them all to stay on, and she didn't want a crowd — just us four — for Mr. Walton was afraid he might not be able to get back at night. And then I could sing in the moonlight just what I loved best myself, which would be just what they would love best.

And then, because she and Mrs. Masters would be a wee bit weary in the afternoon, and might like to rest a little in their rooms she knew I would promise to be nice to Mr. Gresham and take him off for a canter through the hills.

"But you must really promise to be kind to him, little girl, for I couldn't have any harm come to Mr. Gresham, for he's the

very best friend my husband and I have. I think it would hurt *my* feelings too, if he were hurt!" (Isn't she *dear?*)

Would you have promised as I did, Anne, to stay, I mean, not the goodness? I don't know now whether I did right or not, but I *do* know I couldn't very well have done differently. She was so earnest about it all, so sweet and beseeching, and I so wanted more of her and the country and jolly Mrs. Masters, and yes, — more too, as well, of my new *nice* friend. Do you suppose he asked Mrs. Walton to ask me?

It's only the part of a day longer, Anne, for I'll *surely* leave Tuesday, at eleven. I promise you that, *faithfully*. There! I've kissed my letter. Now the compact is sealed! I'll have just so much more to bore you with on my return, though you are not well rid of my scribbling yet: I'll write again to-morrow.

Don't think I'm a traitor, Anne. Really and *truly*, I want to be with you, but I want to be here too. And after Monday, it will be *only* you.

Do get your throat in condition. I know we will want to test its strength.

Adios!

From ARNOLD GRESHAM, *Esquire*
To ROBERT COLTER, *Esquire*

Ryemouth,
Sunday night.

DEAR BOB:

YOU don't mind if I chat with you a little while again to-night, old fellow, do you? The fact is, I've been listening to music — the most wonderful singing I ever heard — and it's echoing in my brain still and blowing in and out of my window, and I don't want to sleep, or let you either. See what it is to have reared me in selfishness!

Bob, how I wish you could have heard Miss Exeter sing as I heard her, and have *seen* her sing as I saw her, to-night. She

was all in black — graceful and almost pathetically slight and young — but for her marvelous hair, which needs no other coloring. And there she sat at the piano, the most beautiful picture in that beautiful music-room, and sang your heart out of you and all your badness, and made you wish you could begin life over again and lead it differently, though it wasn't too late to change it then.

It was the sort of singing, Bob, that makes your eyes troublesome and your throat kind of choky. I was awfully afraid I'd make an idiot of myself before people. I got back into a corner, out of range as much as I dared, and it was a mercy I took the precaution when I saw her go to the piano, for I never listened to such wistful, appealing, stirring, up-setting, *vibrating*, music before!

Having so much, would you wonder if other women rebelled at the justice of a

distribution which pressed down and ran over the already overflowing measure of her blessings with such a gift of precious value! I suppose, though, the fairy godmother just couldn't help it. She was so lovable and beautiful and good, she couldn't help wanting to empty her treasure-chest. Is this maudlin, old fellow? If it is, I just can't help it, like the fairy godmother. I'm not altogether master of my head to-night. The music seems to have played the dickens with my intellect.

You won't care very much, old chap, will you, if my letter is rather full of Miss Exeter to-night? She's been pretty much on my mind all day. She's such an interesting study, so simple yet so complex, so innocent yet so full of saucy whims, so serious yet so full and fond of fun, so keen and alert and brilliant yet in many ways so much like a little child. She does everything better than

any other woman you ever saw, and yet you feel as if you must take care of her, and if you let her out of your sight she'd fall!

She was just like a little girl this morning, when she came out on the veranda ready for church, in a short linen skirt, a sporty linen coat cut very much like my own, and her rough black riding hat perched on the top of that wonderful hair. I couldn't help showing my pleasure in her smartness, and she couldn't help showing her amusement at me; and we started off like a couple of children, and it was the happiest morning I ever spent in my life. I'm going to turn over a new leaf, Bob — a good many of them, for that matter — and go to church every Sunday hereafter. It's a heathenish way I've drifted into, of late years. It made me feel sort of peaceful and better, kneeling there at the side of that devout little saint.

It would be easy to be good if I could do that always!

After the services Miss Exeter and I went in to call on Father Murray — a dear old man, a great friend of Mr. and Mrs. Walton — and he sent us off with his blessing, which somehow made the walk home even more satisfactory than the walk to church had been. Miss Exeter is awfully keen about the country here. In fact she's keen about everything. And so appreciative and kind of interpretive — she finds voices for all your dumb feelings. Oh, how I wish you knew her, Bob! She told me a little about herself this morning — not much, for she shies off from the personal the way a sparrow greets your approach — with her head on one side and her eyes regarding your movements apprehensively, and you have to tiptoe quietly up to the subject and distract her mind with all kinds of figurative crumbs.

It will come easier some day, though, or my name's not Arnold Gresham!

I didn't see much of Miss Exeter this afternoon. The whole country-side drove over for tea at five, and before that Mr. Masters got us all mixed up in some fool game of good-by conversations, in which everyone took off everyone else for a ten-minute farewell chat — stupid fun, *I* thought — and she wouldn't let me have my turn. I suppose she felt I'd had more than my share in the morning. I sat next her at dinner, though, but she had Masters too, and I had Miss Hereford — so the combination was one too many, no, *two* too many — for enjoyment. *Mine*, I mean, of course. Miss Exeter has a maddening habit of being perfectly happy with whomever happens to be around. I've seen traits I like better, Bob!

I acted like a boor, I'm afraid, the latter half of dinner — I don't know what's the

matter with me, Bob, lately. I'm developing a beastly temper all right, away from you. It's time to pull up, I guess. But the music banished all my grumbling at fate, and now I'm going to tell you something else, old man, which makes me feel as mettlesome and full of enthusiasm as when the horn of the hunter is heard in the land.

To-night, after the feminine members of the household had gone up-stairs, I left the men smoking in the billiard-room and stole up to Mrs. Walton's boudoir, for I knew she sat there reading every night, till Mr. Walton came, and I braced up all the nerve I could summon and asked her, if it wouldn't be inconvenient, if she wouldn't keep Miss Exeter till the afternoon train, for I couldn't bear to have her go off that way with all those others — and I did so want — if she would consent — to have one nice, long farewell gallop before she left. Of course,

I didn't put it quite like that to Mrs. Walton, but I might just as well, I guess, for she laughed at me in the most amused sort of fashion, and cut my blundering explanations short with a little affectionate slap of my arm—you know what a thoroughbred she is. My, but her husband is in luck!—and she said she'd not only keep her for the next train, but for a week if she would stay, and anyway over night. She said she'd *promise* me that!

And then that blessed woman left me and pretty soon came back again, and, Bob, she was as good as her word! Miss Exeter had consented to stay till Tuesday, and she had persuaded Mrs. Masters too, and nobody was to know anything about it, but it was to be just a happy secret among us four! And then I sat and talked till Mr. Walton came up, and she told me how she met Miss Exeter last January at a house-party in

Ottawa, and how she and her husband both lost their hearts to her at once, and she insinuated teasingly, as she bade me good-night, that she was glad I had shown the good sense to lose mine, too, and not — as she had feared in the beginning — to throw it away in another direction. I suppose she meant Miss Hereford. Imagine a chap even remembering she lived when Miss Exeter was about!

And so that's why, you see, old man, I'm full to the top notch of enthusiasm to-night. Wish you were here to effervesce with me! You would be, too, if you weren't such a beastly old grind! But there, I know it's no use starting that subject. I fly into a temper every time I even *think* of your fool Spartan stubbornness. *Your* idea of friendship consists in giving all and taking none! As if a lot of miserable, paltry dollars could ever equal the things you lavish on me.

You're an idiot, Bob, and a mighty unpleasant one at that. And I'm another. I ought to have known enough to drop that subject.

Well — here's good-night, old fellow, anyway.

"Bless us both," as Father Murray said this morning.

ARNOLD.

From Miss JOSEPHINE HEREFORD
To Miss ETHEL MONROE

Ryemouth,
Monday morning.

DEAR ETHEL:

I'M off for the Peltons at one o'clock, and small regret, I assure you, I feel at leaving. Of all profitless, *dull*, yawn-hiding house-parties, this one of the Waltons takes the blue ribbon. Such a *hopeless* set of men and girls I never got mixed up in before! There wasn't even *one* approximately attractive individual among them. The girls were all frumps, and the men — with the sole exception of Mr. Andrews, who proved my single oasis in the desert of ennui —

were all *deadly* bores! I don't even except Arnold Gresham!

I never knew *anyone* who has gone off so as he has, Ethel. And I was *so* glad to think he was here, at first! Why, he's positively wearisome and *impossible!* How thankful I am that I have had this year to consider things in! Take my advice, Ethel. Rashness is perilous!

That red-headed girl I told you about seems to like *courting* danger. The way she has literally *thrown* herself at his feet would be disgusting if it weren't so *pitifully* unfeminine. I shouldn't be surprised, though, if it worked all right, and she landed him after all. Persistency does win, you know, and he's too blind, where women are concerned, to notice the indecency of her maneuvers. Well, she's welcome to all she gets, say I. It's a pity, though, it is so little and skim-milked!

And now, Ho for the Peltons! Pray Heaven for me, Ethel, for a good, *our sort*, man! You know the kind *well*, my dear.

Yours with tears of weariness,

JOSEPHINE.

From Mrs. MASTERS
To Mrs. KENT

Ryemouth,
Monday morning.

MY DEAR ALICE:

DIDN'T I tell you I had entered it in my match-making account-book? And I said, So be it, and so it is. Oliver persists I am a Wizard with an accent on the Wiz., but though he scoffs, he has prime faith in my divining-rod, nevertheless.

Yes, Alice, I really think — it will not do to be any more positive at present — but I really *think*, at last, that my beautiful girl is just about ready to fall in love with my beautiful man. There hasn't been any doubt

in my mind of *his* feeling from the first. His eyes have been too eloquent even though his lips kept their own counsel. They and his thoughts, at least, were always with her, though he frequently — much too frequently from his own point of view, and mine also — had to pay the penalty of her consummate belledom and stand like the publican, afar off. She has simply carried the country-side by stampede. The men and women both are infatuated with her sweet manners, and her air and beauty and distinction.

The result, of course, has been a trifle harassing to Mr. Gresham and to *me*, who stood watching the developments, Argus-eyed. But I thought she could not help but be conscious of the story those blue eyes of his were telling her over the heads of the others, and now I am sure of it, for late last night Mrs. Walton came to my room and begged me to let Oliver go up to Cincinnati

with Mr. Walton alone, and me to stay on here with Miss Exeter, Mr. Gresham, and herself, until Tuesday. She said Mr. Gresham had pleaded for one last day unmolested with Miss Exeter, and that she had finally, though rather embarrassedly, allowed herself to be persuaded, and Mrs. Walton thought if I remained behind too, it would make the girl feel more comfortable, and then she and I could entertain each other and let the young people go off happily alone, for their canter.

Of course, I said I would stay immediately, as doubtless you have already guessed, knowing my romantic old heart. And I had a great "I told you so" story, waiting for Oliver when he came up to bed, and he was just as pleased as I was, though he jeered and laughed, of course, and said I had first better catch my 'possum. If I have, I'll drop you a line from Cincinnati and let you

know. You see, I remember *your* romantic old heart, too.

Good-by, dear. Look for us the end of the week.

Lovingly yours,

ADELAIDE.

From Miss MARGARET EXETER
To Miss ANNE SUMNER

Ryemouth,
Monday afternoon.

IT isn't quite time to be up and away with Sir Galahad, Anne, so I'll write out the events of the morning for you.

Yes, the house-party has disbanded, except just us nice four people, and Mrs. Walton and Mrs. Masters have gone to their rooms to rest, and my cavalier is awaiting my coming, marching up and down the veranda, whistling one of last night's songs. Well, let him wait, say you. Exactly, my dear, I agree.

I had breakfast at half after seven this morning. What do you think of that, lazy-bones, after my midnight carousal hour with you? I had promised Dr. Mansfield and down I was — the only lady at the table — to the burlesque satisfaction of Mr. Walton and Mr. O'Trigger. The latter insisted on my driving him to the station, but when we came outside he protested Dr. Mansfield had reversed his orders, for there sat James in the small trap, while the groom held the polo cart for me. Mr. Masters exclaimed that he was afraid of "the nigh eye of the nether 'oss" attached to the trap, but Mr. Walton pushed him up laughingly, notwithstanding; and Dr. Mansfield mounted beside me and off we whirled into the village.

Whole crowds of men I knew were going into town on the 9.10 train, and I held quite a little impromptu farewell reception, throned in my cart. I felt awfully sort of sorry and

forlorn bidding good-by to Dr. Mansfield and the others — it was the first break in our circle — but of course I will see Dr. Mansfield in two weeks — "in two days less, now," he reminded me on leaving — and Mrs. Masters, a little while ago, asked me to come down to her in the Adirondacks in September, with the Waltons and Mr. Gresham, for two weeks. Wouldn't it be sport? But alas, man proposes, you know!

They were all out on the veranda when I drove gaily up to the house, and everybody exclaimed so at my running away so early while Sir Galahad helped me down, that he just murmured "Thank you," half under his breath, but with such a significant look in his big blue eyes that I know he meant about my staying. He *did* have something to do with it then, just as I thought!

We remained out-doors talking and laughing for an hour, and then everyone but Mr.

Gresham went up-stairs to superintend his or her packing. He tried strategy to force me to remain behind too, but I foiled his maneuvers and started off with Elinor Martin, smiling over my shoulder at the rueful look of the man I left behind me. I didn't come down-stairs again until luncheon time — we had it early, at half after eleven — and then we all — Mrs. Walton, Mrs. Masters and everybody — drove off in the coach to the 12.30 train, Mr. Gresham handling the ribbons, with Miss Hereford, of course, beside him on the box seat. He never even asked me to share the honors with him — at least, he didn't in *words* — and I was altogether too happy with Carlton Phelps to trouble to interpret his eyes.

I was almost *tearfully* sorry to say good-by to my Yale boy and to dear Elinor and Nancy Shippen — and we were rather a doleful little group until the out-pulling train

rent us forcefully asunder. I had a graceful finger-tips salutation at the end, from Miss Hereford, who had stood carefully apart from us in the most faultless of silk traveling-cloaks, coquetting to the finish with Mr. Gresham and her Harvard youth. Then we drove home again — the others still ignorant that I was to remain over night — and Mrs. Masters, this time, occupied the position of first lady. I excused myself at once on arriving, and came up here to get ready for my canter, *ostensibly!*

I'm afraid my master of the chase will think I'm a long time preliminary-ing. But, as you remarked in the beginning, Anne, it's a wise woman who keeps a man waiting — before marriage! It's one of the tests of service, says Milton — was it Milton? — too. Only, Sir Galahad, I'm afraid, hasn't been performing his waiting *immovably!* Judging by the sounds which ascend, he has worn

the planks in the veranda to shavings, and besides has run the gamut of my musicale of last night as often as a virtuoso practises scales, and in varying gradations of tone, from grave to gay, from lively to severe.

There! He is whistling My Lady Sweet Arise, again. Isn't he absurd? This time, though, I guess the lady sweet will have to.

Remember! I didn't promise to be A. No. 1 nice to him!

From Miss MARGARET EXETER
To Miss ANNE SUMNER

Ryemouth,
Monday night.

I HAVE been sitting at the window for the last half-hour — how late a half-hour it is I shouldn't like to tell you, Anne — saying good-by to the dear moon and the still hills, and that little patch of glimmering lake and the flowers in the garden and the smooth road that twists into the village. Now, I am paying tiny furtive good-by glances to the dear nooks and corners of this dear room. It all seems so strangely a very part of me — something that is intimately mine and yet not mine — a happy memory to

hoard with the other happy memories of this blessed week's end.

How queerly events shape themselves sometimes, Anne, and what momentous results often arise from apparently insignificant decisions! Only Thursday morning — think of it! — I had never even seen Ryemouth, and never met dear Mrs. Masters or Carlton Phelps or Dr. Mansfield, or any of the other nice people whom I have grown to know so well. And yet it's only a little interval of five days between — five days of sunshine and flowers and fresh June breezes — five nights of moonlight and music and magic and — katy-dids!

I went for my gallop over the hills, and then I came home and dressed for dinner, and after, we all sat and talked on the veranda and then we went indoors and I sang, and afterwards, for a wee minute or two, we strolled out to the veranda for the

last, *last* time, and bade good-night to His Majesty the Moon. And then I came up here and said good-by all over again. And now I am writing to you my final letter from Ryemouth, for Mrs. Masters and I take the eleven o'clock train to-morrow, and I've left all my packing for the morning, so I won't feel as if I were breaking up to-night. How I *hate* severing associations!

Anne, did I *really* promise to tell you "all, all, all?" Because, if I didn't, I don't want to do it, but of course, if I *did* — Yes, I *know* I did, dear, and it's mean to say I don't want to, but it isn't because I don't *like* you to know, but only for the reason that it's such a very new, *new* knowledge even to *me*, that I selfishly want to keep it altogether *mine*, just for to-night. But see, dear, I am going to share it now with you too, only, you must just *whisper* it to yourself, and

think of it only, until I come and we talk it together.

Anne, Sir Galahad asked me to marry him, out in the hills this afternoon. Are you very much surprised? I don't know whether *I* was or not, or rather, I know that for the instant I was overwhelmingly surprised and stunned — and then the surprise all left me and it seemed as if I had known it all my life, and that it was the dearest, truest, strongest, happiest, peaceful-est knowledge my heart had ever buried deep inside of its deepest hidden center!

He said it all began, Anne, the very moment he saw me come towards them on the veranda with Mrs. Walton that first afternoon; and that he nearly upset the samovar he was so glad, so *glad* — and that he felt like throwing both Dr. Mansfield and Carlton Phelps unceremoniously over the railing and allowing nobody but himself to

talk to me; and instead, he had to let everybody else do it, and he do nothing but endure jealous torments all that afternoon and evening, and all of the long next day. He is certainly an impetuous wooer, Sir Galahad!

I told him I called him that, Anne, to you, and also, that I *thought* of him sometimes as Marius, and he looked so pleased and was dear about protesting his unfitness to either title and his unworthiness to love me, only — he "just couldn't help it" — he "simply *had* to do it"!

And now, I'll tell *you*, Anne, what I didn't tell *him*, poor Sir Galahad! I just couldn't help it either. I realize it's absurd when you measure the actual time and when, in some ways, I know so little about him. But it's *he* that counts, not his life or associations, and *time* doesn't matter when it's the one, right man! If I were ever a very susceptible

person you might incline to doubt me, as I would myself. But you remember, I told you from the beginning how queerly intimate he seemed, and that after the night on the veranda when we talked together in the moonlight for the first time, I felt that he understood me as no other friend I ever had — unless, perhaps, you, dear — understood me; that he valued the truth of things as I try to value them; that he loved honor and goodness with a very passion of earnestness; and that he was pure of heart and stanch of will, and proud of bearing, and beautiful of face and form and movement — and *lovable*, Anne, just *lovable*, this dear Sir Galahad of mine!

No, I didn't tell him I loved him, but I confess it now to you. It was too soon to say it to him — too soon for the heart of a girl to lay bare such a precious secret — though the heart of *this* girl *so* wanted to, *so*

badly, that it writhed at the discipline imposed by her will. My heart says, I am a woman, therefore I want to be *won!* My pride says, I am a woman, therefore I must be wooed and wooed and wooed — and then wooed all over again! If he wants me he must storm the citadel and scale the ramparts and enter the town in triumph and search for me — oh, so *willing* to be captured! — in the castle's deepest underground vault. Oh, Anne, I wish my pride were not so great or my heart not so big! — big with love and hope and longing, for this dear new friend of mine.

Isn't it strange, this story of ours — Sir Galahad's and mine — and all these dear people I like so, should be so woven into the thread of my life and yet so little a part of yours? and just because of an unforeseen attack of tonsilitis! Five days, but pretty momentous ones after all. *How* I wish you could have shared them, too. But I've

done my best to bring their pleasure to you, dear, haven't I, and I'll tell you more when I see you Wednesday, — I won't be able to come Tuesday night, Anne, for I must see my mother first, — and then you will have an opportunity to dissect the source of some of my enthusiasms for yourself, as Dr. Mansfield will arrive Saturday week — whatever shall I *do* with him, Anne! — and this Saturday and Sunday Sir Galahad will be there, just to see *you*, he *says!*

Oh, be good to him, Anne, and take him *inside*, at once! Don't think it will make any difference in our friendship. If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart, dear, hold me all the more fiercely now — only, instead of absenting thee from felicity awhile, rejoice in the happiness which has come to make me rejoice. For he is well worthy, Anne. May *I* be as worthy of the great blessing of his love.

MARGARET.

From ARNOLD GRESHAM, *Esquire*
To ROBERT COLTER, *Esquire*

Ryemouth,
Monday night.

BOB, I asked her to marry me. You're not much surprised, are you, old fellow? You're so keen, you probably saw before I did how things were shaping themselves with me. You see, I was here on the spot, and I was so happy and so unhappy, so satisfied and so dissatisfied, so restless yet so peaceful, so certain yet so miserably uncertain, *with* her, that I hadn't sense enough to live beyond the minute, or any time to think, only *feel.* It was pretty close return to the first principles of boyhood, wasn't it, old fellow?

And I feel just like a boy, to-night Bob — just as full of strength and enthusiasm and eagerness and happiness — just as ready to toss the world over my shoulders or play high-diddle-diddle with the cow and the moon — just as anxious for my mountains and just as *sure* I could tunnel through or throw them out of my path with a pinch of dynamite! And still she hasn't said "Yes," Bob, but then she hasn't said "No," and she *likes* me if she doesn't yet love me — likes me better than Mansfield and Belden and Phelps and Cliveden — I *made* her dear voice acknowledge it, Bob — better than any man here or any man at home or any man *anywhere*, in this whole wide, beautiful world! Do you wonder I feel like a boy to-night? I could give you ten and beat you at anything!

It all happened out in the woods in that dear, blessed ride after luncheon. I had

been trying all afternoon, and in fact every moment since I knew her, to tell her how much she was to me, but she wouldn't let me approach within a mile or two of my real feelings and I grew almost *mad* with anxiety, having to conceal them that way, and knowing this was my last chance for an interview alone with her. So when we got up into the hills and she proposed dismounting awhile, to explore, I just kept her hand after lifting her down, and just *made* her listen to what it was choking me to keep hidden.

I know it was brutal, Bob. I hurt her hand, too, when she struggled to get away from me, but my hour had come and I couldn't hold in my heart any longer. And then, afterwards, we sat down on the crest of the hill and I told her the whole story. I'll love that place forever now, Bob, and I know I'll ride up there every day till I go to her on Saturday, — she said I might, old

fellow, — and I'll see her always as she was this afternoon, all in white, my dear little sweetheart, her crop and gloves on the ground beside her, the little straw sailor perched on the side of her head, the dear gorgeous hair sparkling with sunlight, her lovable mouth that trembled a little, her dear brown eyes half misty with tears. Oh, I want her love so, Bob, now and always. I want it, not only to make me happy, but to make me the man she thinks I am. Thank her for that belief, dear little saint, but I'm anything but worthy and God help me to be less unworthy.

Good-night, old fellow. Our friendship seems good to rest upon to-night. You've been a bar of steel to me most of my life — never another so true, so strong, so bright and so finely tempered! Do you remember, in the good old days, our reading and loving Marius together? This is one of the "white nights" for me — full of dream memories of

you, of dream-prophecies of *her!* May the latter prove as happy and as satisfying to my hungry heart as the first, old fellow.

Good-night again. May *you* rest truly, as you deserve.

ARNOLD.

From ARNOLD GRESHAM, *Esquire*
To Miss MARGARET EXETER

Ryemouth,
Monday night.

I WANT to bid you Good-night, dear, or rather, perhaps, Good-morning, for it will be morning when your dear eyes discover this small white messenger slipped under your door, and it is after midnight now, with the moon you love so, low in the sky.

In one way, I hate to see the night merge into morning, for in spite of the "Yes" your dear lips denied me, it has been the happiest day I ever remember in my life. For other reasons, though, I am glad to see it go. I would do my best to hurry it away and

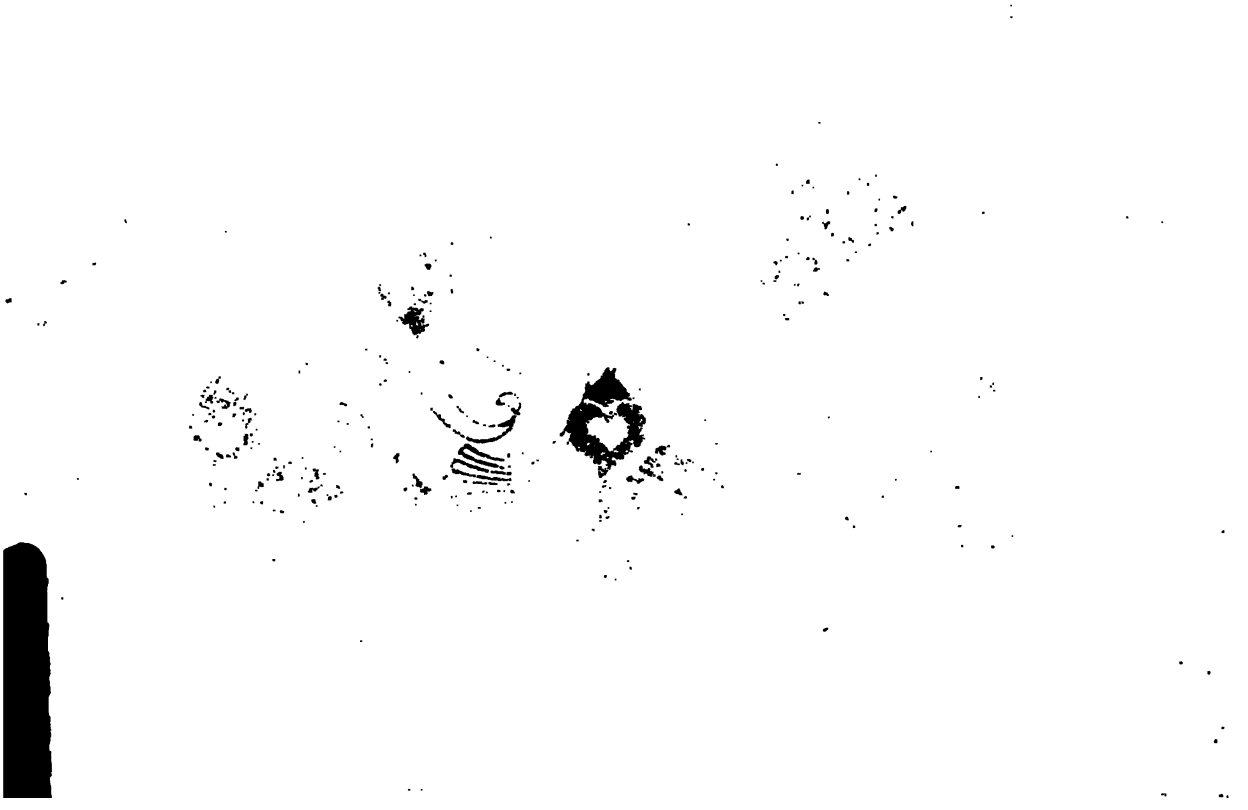
hurry off all the long other waiting days, until the sunlight comes when you can tell me, dear you *love* me. Is it too presumptuous, little sweetheart, to pray you may bless me quickly?

Do you know dear, this is the very first word of love I have ever written any woman? And that what I said to you this afternoon was the first word of love I had ever spoken, either? Till you walked so securely into my heart with your lovable face and your lovable ways and the dear little jaunty suit and hat and the smiling eyes and the wonderful hair — that Thursday afternoon that after all wasn't *mine* but Dr. Mansfield's — till *that* day, dear, I never had more than a second-rate fancy for any girl before. If I cared at all, it was only something to be thought of when my dogs had ceased to interest and it was out of season for a canter — attractive in its way, of course, but, *and* usually, in your way, too.

But I love *you*, love you, *love* you, dear, with my heart and soul, my mind and body, my eyes, my voice, my every thought and hope and feeling. And it is for to-day and to-morrow and all time — for better, for worse — for richer, for poorer — in sickness and in health — in trust, in honor, in service.

And God grant you may soon love me, and may He help me to grow more worthy of the precious gift I pray to receive.

And may He bless us both, His children.

My love to you, dear, *always!*

ARNOLD.